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Inequality in the House

Alice Thomson says we need more Tory women MPs
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Matthew Parris

Cubans watch and wait – but what do they want?
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Who's the greatest?

Vote for Britain's top sporting winner
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PLUS:
Rob Andrew on captain Carling

Manifesto plan for all big towns

Major seeks new grammar school era

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND DAVID CHARTER

EVERY large town in England and Wales could have a new grammar school under plans being drawn up by the Prime Minister's policy unit. Parents, businessmen and community groups would be invited to club together to apply for government money to set up and run schools that selected pupils by academic ability. The new schools would have grant-maintained status and be free from local education authority control.

Tory strategists said that the proposals, which are likely to figure in the Conservative manifesto, were the latest in a series of initiatives to inject greater choice and variety into the state system and to improve standards.

John Major's interest in grammar schools has been stimulated by the Harriet Harman affair. The Prime Minister and his advisers believe that the reaction to the Shadow Health Secretary's decision to send her son to a selective school showed that the public is still wedded to the idea of grammar schools, thirty years after the switch to comprehensive education.

With David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, also admitting that comprehensives have not lived up to expectations, the Prime Minister sees an opportunity to seize the political initiative over education. Labour's sensitivity over the issue was highlighted again yesterday when Mr Blunkett played down the threat to the remaining 161 grammar schools, saying he did not want the next Labour government "tied up" over selection. His party's policy is not to abolish grammar schools, but to let parents vote on their future.

The Downing Street proposals are attracting strong support in the Cabinet, where some ministers are impatient with Gillian Shephard's ap-



Shephard: "on a radical scale of 1-6, she scores 2"

parent reluctance to embrace the grammar ethos. "She's not being radical enough. On a scale of 1-6, I'd score her at about 2," one minister said. An application from Buckinghamshire County Council to build a new grammar school alongside the comprehensives of Milton Keynes has been sitting on the Education Secretary's desk for months.

The plan is partly seen as a counterweight to the Government's existing powers to close down failing schools, many of which are in big cities, so that "sink" schools could be replaced by grammars.

Mr Major's advisers envisage that where a clear demand existed, parents could set up a board of governors to take over an empty school and reopen it as a grammar. They would have to demonstrate that their proposal was practical and professional and that it would deliver high academic standards in accordance with the national curriculum.

If no suitable building were available, groups of parents could apply to build a new school. Capital costs would be met by the private sector and the governors would pay the lease from government grants. At the same time, existing grant-maintained schools would receive further encour-

agement to become selective, to concentrate on specific subjects or to specialise in technical or vocational education. Although 1,000 state schools have opted to become grant-maintained, the momentum has slowed in the past couple of years and ministers see the latest idea as a way of boosting the movement.

Ministers say the idea is to offer all parents a real choice of school, rather than the uniformity of the comprehensive-dominated system.

One Tory strategist said: "The Prime Minister does not want to go straight back to selection overnight. But there is public pressure for a greater degree of selection, higher standards and parental choice."

Local authorities are, however, likely to put up strong resistance to any plans to revive grammar schools.

The National Grammar Schools Association believes there are businesspeople prepared to help fund new selective schools, but it fears that Labour and Liberal Democrat councils would do all they could to disrupt the process.

Margaret Dewar, chairman of the association, said: "This is an absolutely splendid new idea. It would be a way of the Conservative Party being behind selective education without having to find more funds for it. I believe people want a better education for the academically bright children. They are finding that, in the comprehensive schools, children are not reaching their full potential."

She did not, however, think there would ever be a wholesale return to the 11-plus verbal reasoning tests that used to determine which children went to a grammar school. Rather, schools would be allowed to select their pupils on whatever ability they specialised in.



Will Carling, sporting a black eye, said his decision was for "rugby reasons"

Carling tells why he quit

By JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

WILL CARLING announced yesterday that he was giving up the captaincy of the England team for "rugby reasons" and that it was "nothing to do with my personal life".

Carling, 30, whose friendship with the Princess of Wales and subsequent separation from his wife, Julia, drew intense media attention, will lead England out for the 59th and last time against Ireland at Twickenham on Saturday. He has captained England for eight years, including the 1991 and 1995 World Cups, and led the side to three grand

slams. He said he was making way for a younger man to allow his successor to acquire experience before the 1999 World Cup.

Carling emphasised that he was not retiring from international rugby, although he could not guarantee he "would be around for the World Cup in 1999. Three years is a long time."

Looking emotional as he addressed the media yesterday, he was sporting a black right eye, the result of an accidental collision with Tim Rodber – a possible successor

as England captain – during the victory over Scotland in Edinburgh nine days ago.

Jack Rowell, the England team manager, said: "He has come through personal pressures which have been beyond belief. This season he has been playing as well as ever."

Carling said he was giving up on "my own terms". Before the 1995 World Cup he was dropped briefly as captain for calling those running the Rugby Football Union "old farts".

Leading article, page 17
Rob Andrew, page 29

Thatcher brush with IRA killer in Fulton demonstration

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN FULTON, MISSOURI

BARONESS THATCHER came within yards of a convicted IRA killer at the weekend and the police stood by as the man and a crowd of about 80 angry Irish-American demonstrators followed her car down the main street of this small midwestern town.

Although the demonstration proved peaceful and the IRA knows it would gravely damage its cause if it ever attempted violence in America, the incident appeared to be a serious security lapse.

The IRA nearly killed the former Prime Minister and her entire Cabinet in the Brighton bombing of 1983 and there is no reason to suppose Lady Thatcher has ever been removed from her position near the top of the IRA's hit list.

Lady Thatcher was visiting Fulton's Westminster College to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Winston Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain" speech, and as part of those celebrations she and her husband, Denis, helped to re-enact the motorcade that had carried Churchill and President Truman through Fulton in 1946.

The Thatchers' Phantom V6 Rolls-Royce, built for the Queen's 1970 tour of Australia, was the last in a string of vintage cars carrying various local dignitaries and three of Churchill's grandchildren.

As the parade reached the main street she suddenly found herself waving, not at adoring crowds, but at scores of demonstrators led by Matt Morrison, a former IRA gunman who served ten years in Ulster's top-security Long Kesh prison for killing an RUC officer. Mr Morrison is at present fighting deportation from America.

Mr Morrison and his colleagues marched the length of the main street right behind the Thatchers' Rolls, which was travelling at walking pace. They chanted "Maggie Maggie, Out Out Out", distributed leaflets calling her a murderer, and held up home-made placards with slogans such as "Maggie – Do You Ever Think of Bobby Sands?", a reference to the IRA hunger striker who starved himself to death in 1981 as part of an IRA campaign to be treated as prisoners of war.

The scores of police on hand for Lady Thatcher's visit did little to keep the demonstrators away from her, and only when the parade reached the end of the main street did some townsfolk finally string out across the road to block their path.

Mr Morrison told reporters he had ceased being an IRA member after his imprisonment in 1975. He said the demonstration was organised by NIRA and other Irish-American groups and had drawn protesters from St Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee and Kansas City.

It was designed peacefully to "let her know we don't hold her in the same high esteem as a number of people in the local college here".

Later in the day Lady Thatcher delivered a speech urging the West urgently to develop anti-ballistic missile defences against rogue states with weapons of mass destruction.

She toured a Wren church transported from the City of London to create a permanent Churchill memorial on the college campus. Then she posed for photographs by a chunk of the Berlin Wall near a souvenir stand selling Thatcher mugs and postcards.

Rogue state threat, page 10
Leading article, page 17

London shares expected to fall

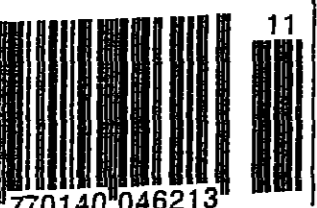
London share prices are expected to be marked down sharply today when the stock market opens. Analysts predict a 30-point fall in the FTSE 100 index. Page 40

Times sales up

Sales of *The Times* set another new record last month. At 688,205, they were up by more than 57,000 on February last year, an increase of 9 per cent, the highest recorded by any national broadsheet daily paper.

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Labour split on Railtrack buy-back

By JONATHAN PRYNN, JILL SHERMAN AND GILLIAN BOWDITCH

LABOUR was at odds last night over how Railtrack should be taken back into public ownership after the election.

With the £1.8 billion flotation due in May, Brian Wilson, the party's railway spokesman, insisted Labour's commitment meant taking Railtrack's assets back into public ownership in their entirety. He is backing the idea of issuing preference shares to City and private investors in

return for their privatised holdings.

But Clare Short, Labour's Transport spokesman, said that was just one option the party had looked at – and it had been dropped.

Meanwhile, Tony Blair is facing mounting pressure from unions over how he will fulfil his pledge of restoring a "publicly owned, publicly accountable" railway. The Government is well advanced with privatisation and only a handful of fragments are expected to remain in the public sector in a year's time.

Mr Blair is expected to announce Labour's formal position within the next two weeks so the policy can be included in the Railtrack prospectus, due to be published early next month.

It is still not clear how much detail will be revealed in the prospectus, which by law must carry a section on "political risk" warning shareholders of the threat to their investment if there is a change of Government.

Yesterday at the party's Scottish conference in Edinburgh, Mr Wilson insisted the commitment meant taking all Railtrack's assets back into public ownership. "The words are unmistakable in their meaning... we will ensure that Railtrack is in public ownership. You cannot have a publicly owned, publicly accountable railway if someone else owns the track, the signals and the stations and operates them for maximisation of private profit."

Mr Wilson, who has worked closely with John Prescott, the Deputy Leader, on a range of schemes for achieving the goal of public ownership, is said by senior Labour sources to be backing proposals

Continued on page 2, col 5

Continued on page 2, col 5

US sends battle group to Taiwan

In a deliberate warning to China, the United States yesterday moved a naval task force closer to Taiwan to foil further military action by Peking in the sensitive strait between the two countries.

China, which began missile tests last week, drew fresh criticism from Washington after announcing it would start "live" wargames tomorrow. Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, said the Chinese should end acts of "intimidation" against the island in advance of its presidential elections on March 23.

Page 10

It's all for Art, say the Hayward Gallery nudes

By JOE JOSEPH

YOU could tell that the five women who spent all day yesterday sitting stark naked in London's Hayward Gallery were baring their bodies in the name of Art.

Even though they were exposing themselves to close examination by spectators, what made it obvious that this really was Art rather than some Soho-style peep-show was that they were doing it for just £50 – a risible rate even among the exploited "body artists" of Soho.

Some were also doing it for the glory

of saying on their still slim CVs that they had now worked with the British film director Peter Greenaway. The elaborate South Bank spectacle, called *In the Dark*, will join *The Draughtsman's Contract* as evidence of Greenaway's genius, or else of his opaque enigmatic trickiness.

The Hayward, which knows how Art can be cruelly misunderstood, was taking no chances: while visitors were free to chat to the women, security guards kept gropers at bay.

But what's it all about? "When we met Peter Greenaway at the casting session," said the naked Tina from

Chicago "he said he wanted to take the seven elements of cinema – actors, props, text, audiences, screens, lighting and sound – and put them in a room. It is a deconstructed cinema kit."

"I felt a bit jittery this morning. At £50 I'm not doing it for the money. Friends said they'd pay me not to do it. Any leers? I've only had one nutter. He wanted to touch me and said he'd pay me a lot of money to pose for him."

Next door, Kirsty Dillon, still at drama school, had noticed that "a lot of people are fairly intimidated. You're automatically put in the position of voyeur as soon as you walk in. But this

is high art." Felicity Schultz said they were projecting an illusion of nudity. Chatting jolly to naked women might be a fifth-former's dream, but unless you have a thick hide it is embarrassing. Gawping is humiliating. Looking away makes you feel like a jellyfish. So shouldn't we pity the retired solicitor from East Anglia over there, getting his money's worth? "What prompted me to come here were the nudes," he says. He is 82, and sprightly. "One doesn't get much opportunity, y'know."

Photograph, page 20

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THIS WEEK IN THE TIMES

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
CLASSICS TO COLLECT  The Romantics, the second of our complimentary CDs PLUS: Libby Purves and Anatole Kaletsky, Commentator of the Year	REFERENCE The Irish President, yesterday visited Warrington, where an IRA bomb exploded three years ago, to unveil a book commemorating all the victims of the Troubles since then. She met Colin and Wendy Parry, the parents of Tim, 12, who was killed in the blast in March 1993 along with Johnathan Ball, aged three. Mrs Robinson, who has visited the Cheshire town three times, also officially opened a week-long Irish festival, known as the Fleadh. Mrs Robinson had been invited by The Bridge, an organisation set up to promote peace and understanding with Ireland. The book, containing the names of all those killed in Irish-related terrorist attacks since the Warrington bomb, will be kept with a book containing messages of condolence from Irish people. After the meeting, Mr Parry said: "The Irish President is clearly one of the leading ambassadors for peace in Ireland. She is always keen to show solidarity with peace initiatives."	FILM OF THE WEEK John Travolta, superstar, in <i>Get Shorty</i> PLUS: Health, Books and Magnus Linklater	POP The Beloved, the couple who created Britain's acclaimed dance band PLUS: The Valerie Grove Interview	HOLLYWOOD PRINCE Giles Whittell meets Robert Redford, in the Magazine PLUS: Weekend, Car 96, 1015 for young Times readers and Vision, the 7-day TV and radio guide

Bruton speech cheers Unionists

By NICHOLAS WATT, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

DAVID TRIMBLE, leader of the Ulster Unionists, will hold talks in Dublin tonight with John Bruton after the Irish Prime Minister launched a stinging attack on the IRA over the weekend.

In an impassioned speech to the Fine Gael party conference in Dublin on Saturday night, Mr Bruton said: "I now ask the IRA not just to stop the violence, not just to restore the ceasefire, I ask the entire republican movement to stop thinking in terms of threats and to start thinking in terms of peaceful persuasion."

Unionists were encouraged when it emerged that Gerry Adams had been excluded from President Clinton's St Patrick's Day party at the White House on Friday, which will be attended by Mr Trimble. It will be the first time that an Ulster Unionist leader has attended the annual party, where the Irish Prime Minister traditionally presents a gift of shamrock to the President.

Mr Trimble will use his first meeting with the three leaders of Ireland's coalition Government tonight to make clear

that London and Dublin must establish mechanisms for disarming terrorists before the start of all-party talks. Ulster Unionists are concerned that Dublin is making a loose interpretation of the final section of last month's Anglo-Irish communiqué which calls on political parties to "address" the Mitchell proposal on decommissioning at the start of all-party talks.

John Taylor, the UUP's deputy leader, who will attend tonight's working dinner, said that before the start of the talks on June 10 Dublin and London must introduce legislation to set up the independent commission on decommissioning proposed by the Mitchell arms body. Once the talks began, political parties would then have to reach agreement on how disarmament would take place before they could move on to other issues.

Mr Trimble hinted yesterday that his party might boycott the start of talks if the legislation for the independent body had not been passed. He told the Dublin Sunday Tri-

bune: "It's got to be in place by June 10. If I suspect the Irish Government is deliberately dragging its feet on this because it thinks this might be a way of delaying the pressure on the Provos on decommissioning, then there'll be similar dragging of feet on other things."

Dublin will move cautiously on decommissioning. While it has said the issue must be addressed, it is conscious of the IRA's vehement opposition to decommissioning ahead of a final political settlement. Michael Ancram, the Northern Ireland Minister, made clear yesterday that Sinn Féin could attend all-party talks only if the IRA restored its ceasefire.

Asked on BBC's *Breakfast* with Frost whether the explosion in west London early on Saturday was a message from the IRA, the minister said: "I have no news on that... but I think it is worth making it clear that no amount of bombs is ever going to bomb the IRA or Sinn Féin's way to the negotiating table. It can only bomb their way from the table."



President Robinson, centre, talking to Wendy and Colin Parry yesterday

Robinson unveils memorial

MARY ROBINSON, the Irish President, yesterday visited Warrington, where an IRA bomb exploded three years ago, to unveil a book commemorating all the victims of the Troubles since then. She met Colin and Wendy Parry, the parents of Tim, 12, who was killed in the blast in March 1993 along with Johnathan Ball, aged

three. Mrs Robinson, who has visited the Cheshire town three times, also officially opened a week-long Irish festival, known as the Fleadh. Mrs Robinson had been invited by The Bridge, an organisation set up to promote peace and understanding with Ireland. The book, containing the names of all those killed in Irish-

related terrorist attacks since the Warrington bomb, will be kept with a book containing messages of condolence from Irish people.

After the meeting, Mr Parry said: "The Irish President is clearly one of the leading ambassadors for peace in Ireland. She is always keen to show solidarity with peace initiatives."

IRA may end bomb warnings

ANTI-TERRORIST detectives fear that the IRA has stopped giving bomb warnings after the explosion in west London on Friday night (Stewart Tiedler writes).

The IRA has not admitted responsibility for the blast but Scotland Yard's Anti-Terrorist Branch believes that it was responsible. It is not clear what the bomber's target was. One theory is that the bomber lost his nerve and dumped the bomb on the way to his destination.

In past campaigns the IRA has given no warnings of attacks on military targets, but has used a recognised codeword to give warning of devices in public places.

The small Semtex device had been placed behind waste bins in a lay-by outside the Brompton Cemetery in Old Brompton Road. The explosion damaged buildings and vehicles near by. Police said the bomb may have been made from material known to be missing from the arms cache found at the home of Edward O'Brien, the Aldwych bus bomber.

NEWS IN BRIEF

New prison terms hit by cell shortage

Michael Howard is expected to have to postpone plans for tougher sentences for persistent burglars and drug dealers because of a shortage of places in jails. Whitehall is considering a phased programme while jails are built. The Home Secretary admitted yesterday that his proposals would mean an increase in the number of prisoners. He told BBC's *Breakfast* with Frost that the Government had yet to establish how many new jails would be needed.

Pensions boom

Appeals tribunals for war pensions are to be increased to meet a backlog of applicants. More than 10,000 people have applied for pensions after a Royal British Legion campaign. Another factor is the change in the law that prevents the payment of pensions for hearing loss of less than 20 per cent.

Gas explosion

Several buildings in Lancaster were on fire last night after a gas explosion that was believed to have been caused by a leak. Police said there were not thought to be any injuries but a number of premises in the city's Cheapside area had been evacuated. Fire crews were tackling the blazes.

Doctor held

A hospital doctor at the centre of a worldwide police hunt since the death of his wife in the Dutch town of Ulaardingen in 1988 was arrested as he finished his rounds at Bedford Hospital, Harold Road, Bedford. Dr. Bojharat, 50, has been charged with murder and remained in custody by Bow Street magistrates.

Toll-free milk

The Isle of Skye's first milk float has been allowed across the toll bridge to the mainland free after initial attempts to make milkman Douglas Henderson pay. Mr Henderson, who used to work on the Skye ferries, claimed his electric-powered float should be exempt from the £4.20 charge as it pays no road tax.

Liverpool sets record council tax to meet £44m shortfall

By A STAFF REPORTER

LIVERPOOL City Council set the country's highest council tax yesterday but managed to stave off compulsory redundancies for its workers, at least for the time being.

Hundreds of workers lobbied the town hall as the Labour-controlled authority agreed a 4.5 per cent increase in council tax, making Liverpool the first place in the country to have Band D bills above £1,000.

A total of 863 jobs were under threat but after a series of meetings with union officials over the past few days the council agreed a package that will involve the loss of an estimated 140 jobs, mainly through voluntary redundancy measures.

The moves to bridge a £44 million budget shortfall before midnight last night included wide-ranging cuts in

services and contributions to voluntary and community groups, with charges for school lunches going up from 85p to £1 a day.

The council's 24,000 employees will be asked to sacrifice one day's pay, agree a pay cut of 2 per cent for six months and forfeit a scheduled annual pay rise of almost 3 per cent. Despite the cuts, the council has still to find a further £2.5 million in savings by the end of this month.

Harry Rimmer, the council leader, emphasised that 85 per cent of properties in Liverpool were in council tax bands A and B, making the average bill £685.

Frank Prendergast, his deputy, said: "This Government has a policy which is to destroy local government and local services. The budget we've put forward we believe

will go some way to trying to rule out some of the injustices being forced on us by central government."

The opposition Liberal Democrat group had earlier proposed an alternative budget package which included a rise in council tax of 3.5 per cent. Mike Storey, leader of the Liberal Democrat group, said that as soon as the budget was agreed there would be a massive hole appearing in it. "We will spend the next 12 months in crisis trying to deal with the problems you've created," he told the Labour group.

He agreed that central government had created big difficulties for Liverpool, but added: "Labour have had 13 years in control of this city and the deficit and the budget crisis we face are a direct result of their stewardship."

Railtrack row

Continued from page 1
als for the share swap. That would give the Government technical ownership of the track system, but dividends would still be paid to shareholders. The proposal has the advantage of low cost to the Treasury, but City sources called it a legal minefield.

Ms Short insisted the idea had been ruled out. "That option was certainly looked at among others, but it will not be in the Railtrack prospectus. It would be silly to go water-tight on what option when we haven't yet got access to all the expertise you have got in Government."

Public ownership of Railtrack has become the key-stone of Labour's strategy for taking back control of the railways as the Government has accelerated its British Rail sell-off. Buying it all back would cost at least £4 billion and has been ruled out by Mr Blair and Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor.

Labour has been struggling to come up with a legally watertight buy-back formula since the Shadow Cabinet reshuffle in October when a previous policy document

drawn up by Michael Meacher was scrapped.

It is facing growing criticism from the rail unions, who regard the delay in announcing the policy with suspicion and doubt the sincerity of Mr Blair's commitment to a publicly owned railway.

Ms Short accused the Government this weekend of taking risks with rail safety system through its "policy driven obsession to sell off everything by the election". However, Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, speaking on BBC Radio 4's *World This Weekend*, denied allegations that he has ordered Roger Salmon, the franchise director, to complete the sale of all 25 rail franchises by the next election to make the privatisation irreversible.

So far, only two rail franchise sales have been completed. A further four are expected to be handed over to private bidders by the end of May. Railway Inspectorate officers continued their investigation yesterday into Friday night's Stafford train crash involving a freight train and a mail train. One man died and 22 were injured.

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Telephone mortgage experts help homeowners exploit rate cuts

By STEVEN DEPUT

WITH INTEREST rates at their lowest point for a generation and expectations of further falls in the months to come, there has never been a better time to arrange a cheap mortgage.

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financial products, home loans are the only business for FirstMortgage.

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Girl of 13 suffered multiple organ failure, spent six weeks on ventilator and had toes amputated

Meningitis victim home after five months in hospital

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A GIRL of 13 who spent five months in intensive care after contracting meningitis will return to school tomorrow for the first time since last September.

Michelle Aucott, from Nuneaton, was given a one-in-a-hundred chance of survival when she was taken to the intensive-care unit of Walsgrave Hospital, Coventry, on September 14. She was suffering from meningococcal septicaemia, a complication of meningitis in which the bacterial infection is spread through the body by the

bloodstream, causing a sharp drop in blood pressure and multiple organ failure.

She lapsed into a coma, her kidneys ceased to function and she was on a ventilator for six weeks. Large areas of her skin disintegrated as the blood supply failed and she had to have her toes amputated. However, doctors were particularly concerned to save her fingers as she is an accomplished musician who plays saxophone with a local band. She was in intensive care until last month.

Richard Matthews, a con-

sultant plastic surgeon who performed extensive skin grafts, said: "For six to eight weeks she was critically ill and thereafter she could have been blown off course for a very considerable time. She was so ill we did not dare operate on her to start with. Meningitis has been such a scourge in people's minds and here's one who survived. She's such an ebullient kid."

Michelle's mother, Diane, 36, from Stockingford, Warwickshire, said: "On the day Michelle was admitted the consultant said there was a very distinct possibility she would die. Five months later, as we were coming home, he said to us: 'There's only one acceptable outcome, isn't there, and this is it.' I think that's right."

Mrs Aucott said that at the height of her illness Michelle had a septic rash covering most of her body. "It was purple at first and then it went black. Her fingers were black and very swollen and it looked as if the blood supply to them was failing. That worried us most because her music is her main love."

When surgeons decided her toes could not be saved, they promised they would not dam-



Michelle Aucott with her mother yesterday. Surgeons promised they would save her fingers so she could continue to play the saxophone

age her hands. "They told her she would be able to stand and walk and would have her fingers to play her saxophone," Mrs Aucott said. "She's a fighter, she's stubborn and she's very strong-willed."

Michelle required skin grafts to 20 per cent of her body but there were few areas from which to take healthy skin. Surgeons employed a technique in which healthy skin taken from her thighs was sliced into a net and stretched to make it go further. The graft has taken and new skin is growing to fill the net.

Mrs Aucott said: "She is trying to walk and she can manage a few steps on her own. You can see the pain on her face but she is determined to get back to normality."

After five months in which everything was done for Michelle in hospital, Mrs Aucott said she was frightened when she came home. She and her husband, Terry, 40, a sheet metal worker, have two other children aged 12 and 9.

"I had had the back-up of all the staff watching Michelle and making sure she was OK," Mrs Aucott said. "Now I've got that responsibility. The staff on the intensive-care unit got very close to her. They did everything for her, nothing was too much trouble. I think they think she's a courageous lady."

Yesterday Michelle said: "I

am still really sore but I don't think about what happened. I concentrate on getting better."

She said her feet were painful but she was relieved that her hands were unaffected. "I would rather lose my toes than my fingers."

Was she looking forward to school? "I'm a bit nervous — but it's boring at home."

Deaths on increase

CASES of meningococcal meningitis increased by more than a third last year to their highest total for six years. There were 1,827 cases, 483 more than in 1994, and 185 deaths.

One in ten of the population carry the meningococcal bacterium in their throats at any one time and can pass it to vulnerable people by kissing or other close contact.

Meningitis occurs in two main forms, viral and bacterial. Viral meningitis is a mild, flu-like illness that requires no

special treatment. Bacterial meningitis is life-threatening and needs urgent treatment.

Symptoms of meningitis are fever, severe headache, nausea and vomiting, dislike of light and a stiff neck. This is followed by drowsiness and in some cases loss of consciousness. In about half of cases there is also a blotchy red rash. Symptoms of meningococcal septicaemia are fever with vomiting, rash, cold hands and feet, rapid breathing and pains in the stomach, muscles and joints.

Coma man uses computer link to tell of attack

By CAROL MIDDLEY

A MUSICIAN who spent two years in a coma after what was thought to be a rail accident has managed to tap out a message on a computer that someone tried to kill him. Police have re-opened their investigation into the injuries to Geoffrey Wildsmith, 21, who was found lying in a pool of blood on a train home from Haslemere to Guildford in April 1994.

Part of his skull and brain were missing and there were traces of flesh by an open window in the carriage. Detectives concluded that he had leant out and either been hit by a passing train or a tunnel.

His mother, Marie Appasamy, said yesterday that the message had come as a terrible shock. "When the police told me what he had been able to tell them about the attack I just couldn't believe it. I find it hard to come to terms with the fact that anyone would hurt him. He was loved by everybody."

"For nearly two years we have all believed it was an accident and now the police are investigating something more sinister."

She said the time when her son regained consciousness to acknowledge her was the most wonderful and emotional moment. "It was only a single sound on a buzzer which the hospital had rigged him up with but it meant the world to me."

Mr Wildsmith, who was completely paralysed and in a vegetative state at the Royal



Geoffrey Wildsmith before the attack

Hospital for Neuro Disability in Putney, southwest London, began to show movement in his finger last month. Technicians set up a computer with a buzzer and an alphabet code to enable him to communicate.

Asked if he remembered his accident he tapped out, letter by letter, that it was not an accident but a deliberate attack. Dr Keith Andrews, the hospital's medical director, called in the police and a team led by Detective Inspector Ron Wainer visited Mr Wildsmith in the ward.

They took down his story and began reinterviewing the people questioned at the time. They have also managed to track down two others and question them.

Mr Wildsmith, a bass guitarist then aged 19, had been playing on the night of the attack with his band Rich and Famous at the Haslemere Hotel. The band had made demo tapes in London recording studios.

Woman out with dogs is found murdered

By HELEN JOHNSTONE

A WOMAN who was out walking her dogs was found murdered yesterday in the shallows of a river. Her two dogs were found whining and barking near by.

Police were last night trying to identify the woman, whose body was discovered in the River Ely in the Fairwater area of Cardiff by a passerby.

Detectives were awaiting the results of a post-mortem examination to establish the cause of death. The woman was in her mid-thirties and was wearing a wedding ring, engagement ring and eternity ring.

Police said they had not ruled out a sexual motive. The woman's body was partially clothed and torn clothing was found near by.

The murder scene, alongside a field overlooked by housing, is a quarter of a mile from the spot where Geraldine Falk, 27, a shipping clerk, was raped and murdered five years ago as she returned home from her firm's Christmas party. Her partially clothed body was found in a children's playground 100 yards from her home after she was stabbed and battered to death. Her killer was never caught.

The woman was described as 5ft 5in tall, slim with shoulder-length brown hair and brown eyes. She was wearing a brown leather flying jacket with a sheepskin lining and a diagonal zip, and a beige and green mottled cable-knit sweater.

Sonic the Hedgehog wins a place in cinema history

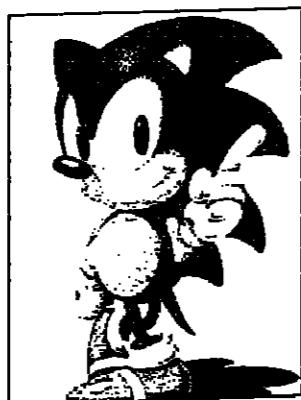
By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

SONIC the Hedgehog is to join film classics such as Charlie Chaplin's 1925 *The Gold Rush* and Abel Gance's 1927 *Napoleon* in the National Film and Television Archive.

The British Film Institute has decided that video games are an art-form that needs to be preserved for posterity. The aim is to ensure that early examples of the moving image's latest format are not lost, and to give historians of the future an insight into popular culture.

As well as Sonic, the archive will have games cartridges, discs and cassettes from the early electronic era, such as *Space Invaders*, to the latest virtual-reality adventures.

It is thought that 80 per cent of the films made in cinema's first 35 years have been lost. Hitchcock's 1926 silent *The Mountain Eagle* is among those that are feared gone forever. Jane Clarke, the BFI's assistant director, said: "We



Sonic an "icon" of popular culture

are determined not to see early computer games disappear in the same manner as many of our early films.

"Although occasionally we are lucky enough to uncover a treasure, as happened last year when we came across film of the 1895 Derby, it is unlikely that we will ever rediscover more than a small number of lost films."

The national archive holds some 275,000 items. The BFI believes that the video-game

collection will allow researchers 100 years from now to learn more about the lifestyle and interests of young people in the late 20th century.

"We're interested in not losing that history. Popular culture often tells you so much about society," Ms Clarke said. Video games have also influenced films, with spin-offs such as *Super Mario Brothers*, starring Bob Hoskins, released in 1993.

She acknowledged that there may be criticism of such support for popular culture, rather than "art", but said: "When cinema started in 1895, it was in the music hall and fairgrounds. It was a popular, mass art-form. We are totally unashamed of showing something with mass appeal."

Sega, the Japanese company that produces Sonic, the biggest-selling video game in Europe, said: "We are proud that this icon has been recognised."

An original French poster for *Napoleon* is expected to reach about £15,000 at auction at Christie's tomorrow.

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A letter from James Goldsmith to the Candidates and Supporters of The Referendum Party.

The Government is indicating that it is moving towards granting a referendum. That's all to the good. But it must be genuine. Obviously the Government's commitment should be unconditional and the referendum would need to be held prior to, or at the same time as, the next General Election.

But an agreement to hold a referendum only if the Cabinet decides that sterling should be absorbed into the European single currency would be an empty gesture. That decision is unlikely to be made during the life of this Government. The commitment to hold a referendum following the General Election would be of limited value because a future Government would not necessarily be bound by it.

The referendum should allow for a full debate on the sort of Europe of which Britain wants to be part. There are two principal visions of Europe.

The original plan was that the European Community would consist of a family of nations which would pool some of their sovereignty, but only where necessary and never against the will of any nation. This was set out in the White Paper when Britain joined the EU (then the EEC), in which it was stated, "There is no question of any erosion of essential national sovereignty... all the countries concerned recognise that a commitment to impose a majority view in a case where one or more members consider their vital interests to be at stake would imperil the very fabric of the Community."

The other vision is that of a single European super-state into which would be fused existing European nations. This super-state would have one government, one parliament, one over-riding Court of Justice and so on. That is the Europe of Maastricht. Whether we like it or not, Maastricht has put us on "automatic pilot" towards such a single European state.

The referendum needs to ensure that people can decide which Europe they seek for Britain. The referendum on a technical aspect of the Treaty, without a full debate on the fundamental issue, would be no more than a continuation of the fudge and subterfuge which has led Britain into a European construction diametrically opposed to that which was approved during the 1975 referendum on our membership of the EU.

That is why we urge the Government not to duck the issue and not to believe that they can defuse the problem by making a hollow commitment. On the contrary, they must encourage a full, open and fair debate on the most important issue that any nation could possibly have to face.

If you wish to become a supporter of The Referendum Party please write to:
5, Galena Road, Hammersmith, London W6 0LT. Tel: 0181-563 1155. Fax: 0181-563 1156.

مكتبة الأما

Sheriff of Newbury takes on the treetop greens



Nicholas Blandy, left, the man charged with evicting protesters from the treetops, says the job is among his toughest. Tony Juniper of Friends of the Earth, right, contends he should never have had to do it

By STEPHEN FARRELL
AND ALEXANDRA WILLIAMS

'We are not going to get stopped and the road is going to get through, which is as it should be'

THE cost of policing the Newbury bypass protest passed £1 million this weekend, with the opposing sides remaining as entrenched in their views as when forcible evictions began two months ago. The clashes between tree-dwelling "eco-warriors" and road builders show no signs of abating.

The man responsible for clearing the precarious tree houses, 60ft above ground and linked by rope walkways, is Nicholas Blandy, the resolute Under-Sheriff of Berkshire. "I think it's very important to create the atmosphere that we are not going to get stopped and the road is going to get through, which is as it should be," he says.

Ranged against him is Friends of the Earth, the organised arm of the protest movement, and its deputy campaign director, Tony Juniper. "This is the most destructive road in the entire national roads programme," he says. "I don't think people will allow this to happen again, now they have seen the wanton destruction."

The protesters' tactics have not been without success. When the evictions began on January 9, the total policing bill for the 2½-year bypass project was estimated at £12 million. "We are only two

months into it and we have already spent more than we expected," a Thames Valley Police spokesman said.

The work of getting the tree-dwellers down is proving slow and arduous. Mr Blandy, however, points to his success in clearing the main camp last week. Over two days bailiffs, professional climbers and tree surgeons evicted scores of demonstrators from the oaks, beeches and sycamores at Snelmore Common, the focus of protest along the nine-mile route.

Experienced activists had earlier dug hundreds of feet of tunnels through the soft, damp soil, preventing heavy bulldozers from entering the woodland in January. However, by Friday most of the deadlocked denizens of the treetops had been plucked from the branches and the trees cleared.

On the ground, Mr Juniper kept his binoculars focused on his task of orchestrating the anti-road information campaign. Above him a naked eco-warrior, wearing only red rubber gloves and

vaseline, hopped from one branch to the next as the climbers and bailiffs pursued him in a cherry-picker crane. In the next tree, a "druid" calling himself Arthur Uther Pendragon shouted support as Newbury housewives below clapped and brewed tea.

Other locals detest the tree-dwellers. Lorry drivers often jam CB radio frequencies used by the protesters.

Mr Juniper spends one third of his time at Newbury, patrolling the security cordon, explaining the issues to journalists and seizing on whatever events can be turned to advantage. Within seconds of hearing that a mountaineer hired to evict treetop protesters had resigned in disgust,

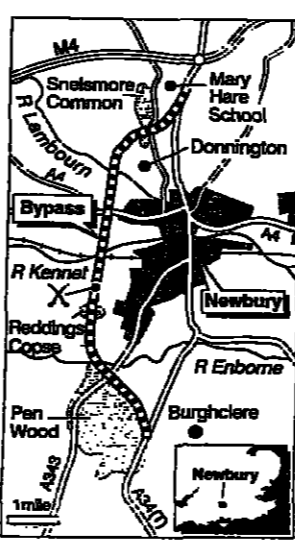
he was on his mobile telephone to the Friends of the Earth office dictating an instant press release. For two years, he has had the issues and details at his fingertips. He is paid £25,000 a year to know every argument and counter-argument put out by the Central Office of Information and at the Highways Agency.

Mr Juniper is passionate in his beliefs. He argues for better public transport, park-and-ride facilities, flyovers and underpasses at roundabouts and more freight-to-rail, instead of a bypass created, as he sees it, to benefit landowners on the route and allow developers to build along it. The Under-Sheriff has no illusions

about his popularity among the eco-warriors. Mr Blandy, a 47-year-old solicitor whose father was Under-Sheriff before him, has brought in bailiffs, climbers, cranes and a tunnelling expert. He says: "I need to get all aspects of the law right, which would be extremely difficult to do if I wasn't a solicitor. It is all down to experience. You also learn the job from the person who has done it before, which in my case was my father."

"I'm not a military man, so I don't know what a military campaign is like, but it must be something similar. You know basically what your objective is and where you are going each day, but you don't know who you are going to meet."

"Some of these people feel very deeply about roads and find peaceful means of protest. I don't have a problem with them. Others are here to cause public nuisance and for them I have very little sympathy." To date, 447 people have been arrested at the bypass, mainly on charges of aggravated trespass and obstructing the sheriff. The Highways Agency, responsible for



'Some are civil, others abusive'

TREE-FELLERS employed at the Newbury bypass normally clear 80 trees a day, but spikes and barbed wire inserted in the trees by the "pixies" on the bypass route have reduced the rate to ten.

The three self-employed tree-fellers hired by Blackwells, the route clearance contractors, earn £250 a five-day week. They remain earthbound while 18 higher-paid tree surgeons clamber above from tree to tree, isolating the protesters by lopping off branches using chainsaws hanging from their belts.

Once the protesters are out, the fellers move in. On normal jobs they can take anything from three minutes to three quarters of an hour to cut a tree after the initial assessment of risks from power cables, situation and where they want it to land. At Newbury the hazards slow them dramatically, leaving the fellers with little sympathy for their adversaries.

"I can sleep at night," a 42-year-old with six years' experience said. "We have to have a look around in front of us to make sure there's no metal left in the tree or we can end up with a chain flying off into our face. Very few people



The evidence collector and the tree-feller, workers who are left with little sympathy for their adversaries

know that the trees they spike can't be taken away to use for pulp wood. They have to be burnt, so some other tree somewhere else has to be cut down." The tree-feller, a local man, claims that only 25 per cent of the oak, sycamore, beech, ash, cherry and silver birch on Snelmore is good-quality timber.

Of the protesters, he says: "Some of them are quite civil and talk to you. Others shout abuse, but it goes in one ear and out the other. I'm all in favour of the bypass. I have to



make sure I'm through Newbury before 7am otherwise it adds an hour to the journey." Each day six police evidence teams patrol the campsites to gather intelligence and evidence for prosecutions. They operate in pairs, one carrying a video camera, the other a tape recorder.

An average day may produce one hour of filming, filed away and kept for five years, as with police interview tapes. The job is done by volunteers who receive between one and

two weeks' special training. The police teams are supplemented by separate evidence collectors from the Treasury Solicitor's office, who operate in threes and wear green helmets.

Like the police teams, their evidence is crucial for prosecutions. The films and tapes are backed by intelligence from undercover officers who have infiltrated the main protest groups months earlier.

Thames Valley Police is in control of the operation, involving hundreds of officers on foot or horseback or in patrol cars that block access roads. Extra manpower is supplied by other forces.

The officer in charge of the operation is Assistant Chief Constable Ian Blair. Day-to-day control rests with a senior officer designated "Bronze Commander". A Thames Valley Police spokesman refused to discuss how many officers were deployed each day.

Working alongside the police are 650 white-helmeted private security guards from Reliance Security, who are paid £4 an hour and work in teams of between ten and 18, overseen by a red-helmeted supervisor, who earns 25p extra.

"WHAT does it feel like when a tree goes down?" Christine Crerar, 50, who lives near the proposed bypass, shouted at a policeman. "You are only puppets. You didn't join the police force to watch this. None of you did. You have got to live with this for the rest of your lives."

"There is a school for deaf children at the top of that hill [the Mary Hare School]. They learn classical music by laying their heads on the table and listening to the vibrations. This route is going through the grounds of their school."

"The noise of the traffic will stop them from hearing loud sounds. They will not be able to talk to each other in the playground. You cannot tell me that you agree with that and condone it. If you don't care about that there is something wrong with you, you don't belong in the police force. I don't think you are human. You have got to stand up and do the job you were asked to do, to uphold and protect people. What you are doing is blatantly not what you signed up to do," Ms Crerar, of East End, Hampshire, told Hampshire Constabulary PCs 2258 and 1937. The constables were reinforced



Christine Crerar, concerned about deaf school, and Jerry, veteran protester and breacher of the peace



programme or, failing that, to make it as expensive as possible.

He is the all-round protester, permanently wearing a climbing harness, ropes, clips and Davy Crockett hat as he runs around the security cordon offering support to those in the trees. Inside the rucksack is also a citizens' band radio base station and handset, and a mobile telephone. All ensure constant contact with the 15 CB stations linking the "twigloo" camps along the nine-mile route and the frequencies change every day to stop local CB enthusiasts and lorry drivers jamming them.

A single parent, he does not have to sign on every week for his £60 benefit payments, giving him more time to protest. "I do a bit of PR, liaison with other camps, hassling security guards and ground support," he said of his role.

"For me it's not so much the land but the damage done to the ozone layer that's at stake. It's part of the national or even global transport problem, all linked with global warming and fumes from the internal combustion engine. That's why I'm here. And I'm going to do it forever."

Scientists may realise Franklin's dream

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A MAN who has spent years attempting to discover the fate of Sir John Franklin, who disappeared with two ships in 1847 while searching for the fabled Northwest Passage, is hoping to fulfil the Victorian explorer's dream of a new trade route to the Pacific.

Dr Peter Wadhams, of the Scott Polar Institute in Cam-

bridge, led an expedition to the Arctic that unearthed evidence about Franklin and the *Terror*, which left England in 1845. In 1993 he established that Franklin, who is credited with having proved the existence of the Northwest Passage, perished between the Atlantic and the Pacific in 1847

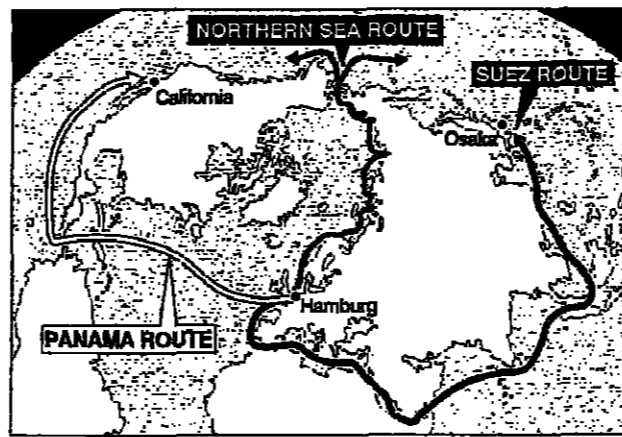
after his expedition became trapped in ice.

Dr Wadhams is now a leading figure in the international effort to open a route across the roof of the world. The Northern Sea Route, linking the Atlantic and the Pacific through the Barents and Bering seas, will increase travel by cutting the voyage from European ports to Osaka to 22 days. The route through the Suez Canal takes about 32 days. The new route would also rival the Panama Canal.

The International Northern Sea Route project, involving 100 research institutes and trade organisations in several countries, is studying new designs for icebreakers as well as legal and insurance issues. The project has the backing of Neil Kinnock, the European Transport Commissioner. The Commission is to spend part of its maritime research budget on new ice-breaking tech-

nologies. Captain Lawson Brigham, formerly of the United States Coast Guard and now at the Scott Polar Institute, said the economics of the route had been made more favourable by global warming.

Dr Wadhams said yesterday: "Satellite readings show that a retreat of the ice on the Arctic fringes is occurring. If it continues it could make the



Northern Sea Route open for many more months of the year, if not for 365 days." The scheme could end the West's dependency on the Suez Canal, which is in a politically unstable region. Western firms would be able to exploit Siberia's diamond, oil, gas and precious-metal resources. The research group will produce its findings in 1998.

They are now at the small coastal town of Pevek, eastern Siberia, and aim to reach the Bering Strait in the next two weeks. Satellite technology will show if the ice is thick enough for them to make the 25-mile crossing.

Drivers aim to cross frozen strait

A TEAM of drivers hopes to be the first to drive all the way from Europe to the United States by crossing the frozen seas of the Bering Strait between Siberia and Alaska in an 18,000-mile expedition called Project Overland.

The squad of eight drivers (two Russian, two German, and four Italian) left Turin, Italy, in November in four specially adapted lorries made by the Italian manufacturer Iveco. As they drove through eastern Siberia, often across areas without roads, temperatures fell to -35C and they were beset by blizzards.

They are now at the small coastal town of Pevek, eastern Siberia, and aim to reach the Bering Strait in the next two weeks. Satellite technology will show if the ice is thick enough for them to make the 25-mile crossing.

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THE OLIVER & CLAIRE STRIP

Brown defends cut in benefits after conference defeat

By JILL SHERMAN AND GILLIAN BOWDITCH

GORDON BROWN put up a robust defence yesterday of his plans to dock benefits from work-shy claimants after the proposal was heavily defeated at the Scottish Labour Party conference in Edinburgh.

The Shadow Chancellor refused to give way after conference delegates overwhelmingly rejected his proposal to withdraw 40 per cent of benefit from young people who refuse to take up a job or training place. While delegates backed his proposals to secure better job opportunities for 18 to 25-year-olds, they supported a resolution condemning the compulsory element of the scheme. The plan, yet to be ratified by the national party, has been privately opposed by some members of the Shadow Cabinet.

Yesterday Mr Brown echoed a phrase used by Tony Blair on Friday that hard choices would have to be made in Labour's manifesto when

rights would have to be matched with responsibility. He insisted that under Labour's plans, young people under 25 would have four choices: to get a job with a private employer, a voluntary organisation, Labour's environmental task force or earn a place on a training scheme.

"For the first time, real jobs not schemes. For the first time, wages not just benefits," said Mr Brown. "For the first time, high-quality training, not the stigma of poverty pay. For the first time, a plan to abolish youth unemployment and money to pay for the plan."

"And just as I say that it is right that opportunities and responsibilities go hand in hand, so I also say it is right that the unfair profits of the privatised utilities should pay for a fair deal for the country's young unemployed."

Mr Brown was given a lukewarm reception for an otherwise low-key speech,

which focused on the job insecurity that he said had been created by the Government. "It is an insecurity that scares men and women in their 40s and 50s who fear if they lose their jobs they will never find another one: insecurity that terrifies young couples who worry that if they lose their jobs they will lose their homes too."

The earlier conference defeat for Mr Brown followed signs that the Scottish party has still to be convinced of the merits of new Labour. The leadership suffered a number of defeats, including a call for Trident to be scrapped and a motion calling on the party to set targets for full employment within a specified timetable, both of which are against national policy.

But party strategists narrowly avoided another damaging defeat when, after successful arm-twisting in the early hours of yesterday they

managed to stop a motion calling for a vote on the re-nationalisation of privatised utilities and on a set figure for a national minimum wage of half average male earnings. The resolution was proposed by the Transport and General Workers Union and seconded by the Manufacturing, Sci-

ence and Finance Union. But after long negotiations, the sponsors agreed to omit the resolution in the interests of party unity.

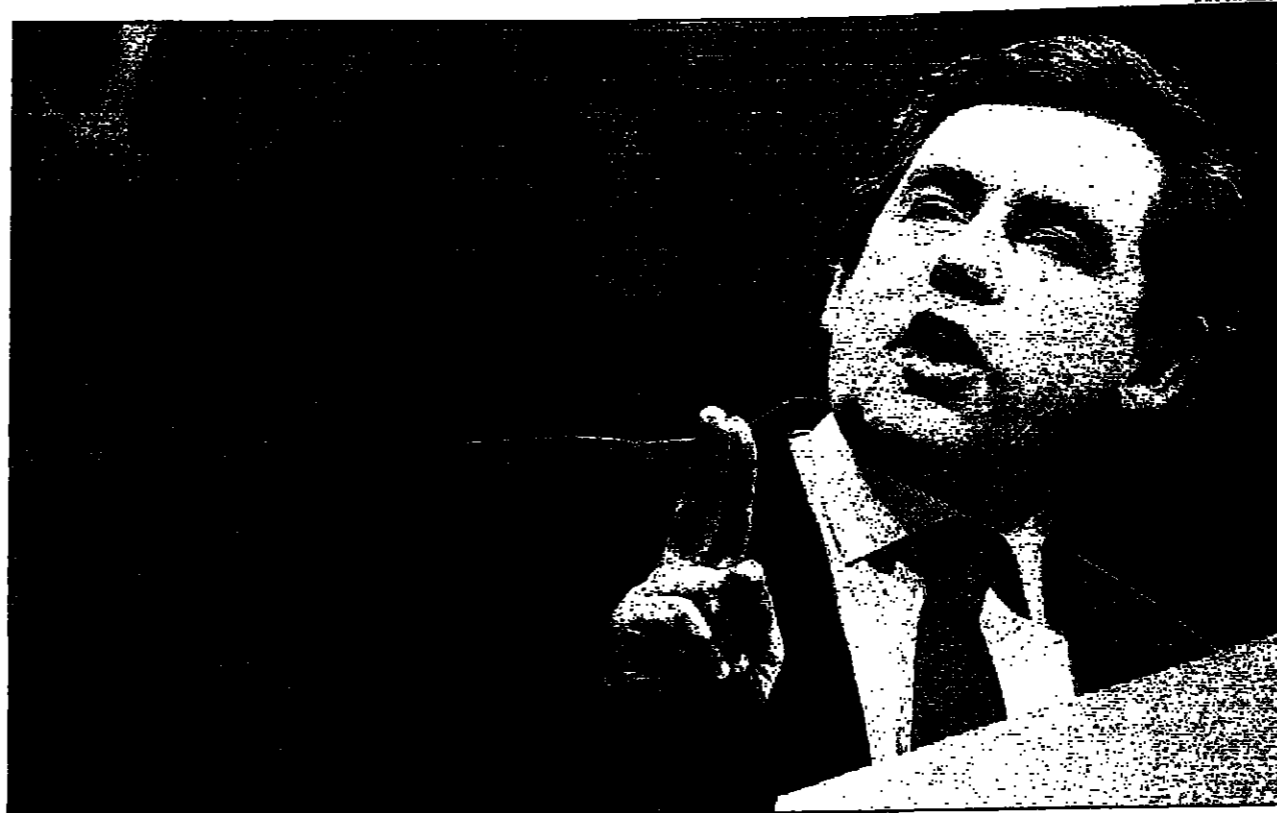
In his closing speech to the conference, Jack McConnell, general secretary of the Scottish Labour Party, urged his audience: "We have record

levels of support and we can be confident about the general election — but we must never be complacent."

Labour pledged yesterday to help small firms as John Major prepared to unveil proposals to cut red tape and ease the burden of Whitehall and European regulations. On the

eve of Mr Major's speech, Labour released a briefing paper accusing the Tories of betraying fledgling firms.

It said that the five leading priorities of small businesses were economic stability, laws against late payment of bills, lower taxes, bigger grants and subsidies, and less red tape.



Gordon Brown at the Scottish Labour conference. His plan to cut payments to work-shy claimants was opposed

Sceptics threaten revolt on EU White Paper

By NICHOLAS WOOD
CHIEF POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

LEADING Tory Euro-sceptics reiterated their warning yesterday of a Commons revolt unless the Government promises to claw back powers from Brussels in tomorrow's White Paper.

But with ministers planning few concessions, the risk increases that John Major will be defeated a week before the Turin summit on the future of Europe.

The protest threat, led by Norman Lamont and Bill Cash, came amid continuing Cabinet anxiety over Kenneth Clarke's refusal to accept a referendum on a single currency. Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, has been asked to take charge of efforts to persuade Mr Clarke to give ground.

Mr Clarke is said to oppose a referendum on constitutional grounds, arguing that important decisions in a parliamentary democracy should be taken by Parliament. He also fears a simplistic campaign in which right-wing newspapers would whip up sentiment against the euro.

Bill Cash, MP for Stafford, said the White Paper should seek to reduce the powers of the European Union. "It is not enough to throw in a few titbits. If the omissions are so great, I would anticipate that a significant number of people would want to vote against the White Paper... I would be very likely to do so."

Mr Cash's comments on BBC's *On the Record* were supported by Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, in the same programme. He said the White Paper should concentrate on repatriating powers lost to Brussels. "In many areas, Britain has ceased to be a self-governing country. Only this week we've seen what happened in fishing. The House of Commons actually passed an Act of Parliament to protect the British fishing industry from being bought up by the Spaniards and we've been overruled by the European Court. I don't think it's acceptable."

John Townend, the newly elected chairman of the 92 Group, the biggest backbench grouping of rightwingers, and Christopher Gill, one of the former eight whipless Euro-rebels, also hinted at voting against the White Paper.

The Government is hoping to avoid humiliation in the debate on the White Paper on March 21 by effectively giving Conservative MPs the night off. But with Labour considering turning out in force, ministers may have to rethink their tactics.

Labour 'to take M&S line' over complaints

By NIGEL WILLIAMSON
WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR has consulted Marks & Spencer about applying its methods of dealing with complaints to government services.

The party believes that M&S's refund-without-questions policy could provide the model for consumer satisfaction in the public sector. Derek Foster, Shadow Public Services Minister, said: "As part of the stakeholder concept we are looking at how the consumer can feel involved in the design and delivery of services. The complaints mechanisms operated by Marks & Spencer are a model in consumer satisfaction."

Under the Labour scheme, consumers would be given a commitment that complaints would be dealt with immediately at source. In any dispute consumers would be given the benefit of the doubt. In difficult cases, where investigation was required, dissatisfied consumers would be given a firm timetable for settling the dispute.

Susan Sadler, M&S corporate affairs spokeswoman, welcomed Labour's interest. "It's always nice to be recognised. We pride ourselves on our customer services."

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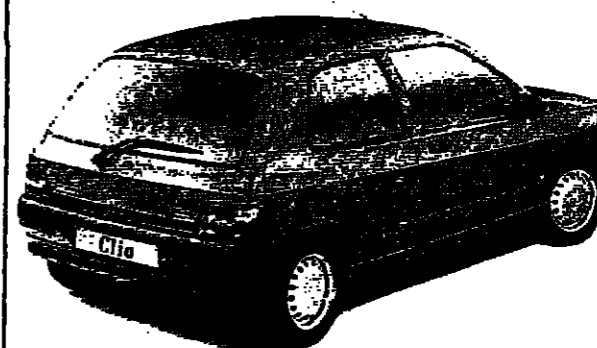
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50 runners-up will receive a copy of EMI's new compilation CD *Baby Love*, produced on behalf of Tommy's Campaign with 80 per cent of net profits going to the charity. All the artists on the album have agreed to waive their royalties and in a special move, J Sainsbury and SavaCentre are donating £1 from the sale of every album in their 240 sound and vision departments to the charity. Sainsbury is selling the CD at £11.99 (essence £7.99).

Tommy's Campaign was set up in 1992 to discover why 40,000 babies are born too soon and too small each year in the UK, why one in four women miscarry and why one in 50 babies are lost through stillbirth. The charity funds a wide range of vital research projects and through the dedication of its Professor of Foetal Health, Lucilla Poston is expanding its influence both within the UK and abroad.

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مكتبة الأنا

BY ANDREW PIERCE

Colin: strong claim

Andrew: DNA test

Daniel: fresh doubts

BY A STAFF REPORTER

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

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America presses Assad to attend anti-terror summit

By Christopher Walker in Jerusalem, Charles Bremner and Our Foreign Staff

THE United States and Egypt were attempting yesterday to persuade President Assad of Syria to attend this Wednesday's unprecedented anti-terror summit in southern Sinai, or to at least send a senior representative.

A Syrian presence among the 32 countries that will meet in the Red Sea resort of Sharm El Sheikh would be regarded as a key step in isolating the Islamic extremists now threatening Israel as well as a number of moderate, pro-Western regimes in the Gulf. By last night there had been no answer from President Assad. The Syrian media studiously ignored the summit, to be attended by Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin.

As preparations for the summit proceeded, a potentially damaging split was emerging between the key players. America and Israel are insisting that the primary aim is to combat the spread of Islamic terrorism, while Egypt claims it is to discuss the future of the peace process.

Radical Arab states and the Israeli right wing have ridiculed the costly and remote summit, organised after the series of suicide bombings by Hamas in Israel which have killed about 60 people and traumatised the nation.

Behind the summit rhetoric, many politicians and radical leaders are viewing it as an attempt to prop up Shimon Peres, the embattled Prime Minister of Israel facing an election, and Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian Authority leader who faces pressure from Israel to crack down on Hamas.

Israel's right-wing Likud party said contemptuously: "This is a summit to save Shimon Peres, rather than to do anything about terrorism." But Mr Peres, expected to push for sanctions against Iran, said the presence of a large number of Arab states at such a security forum was evidence of "a new Middle East in which the Arab world is joining in Israel's fight against terrorism".

European Union foreign

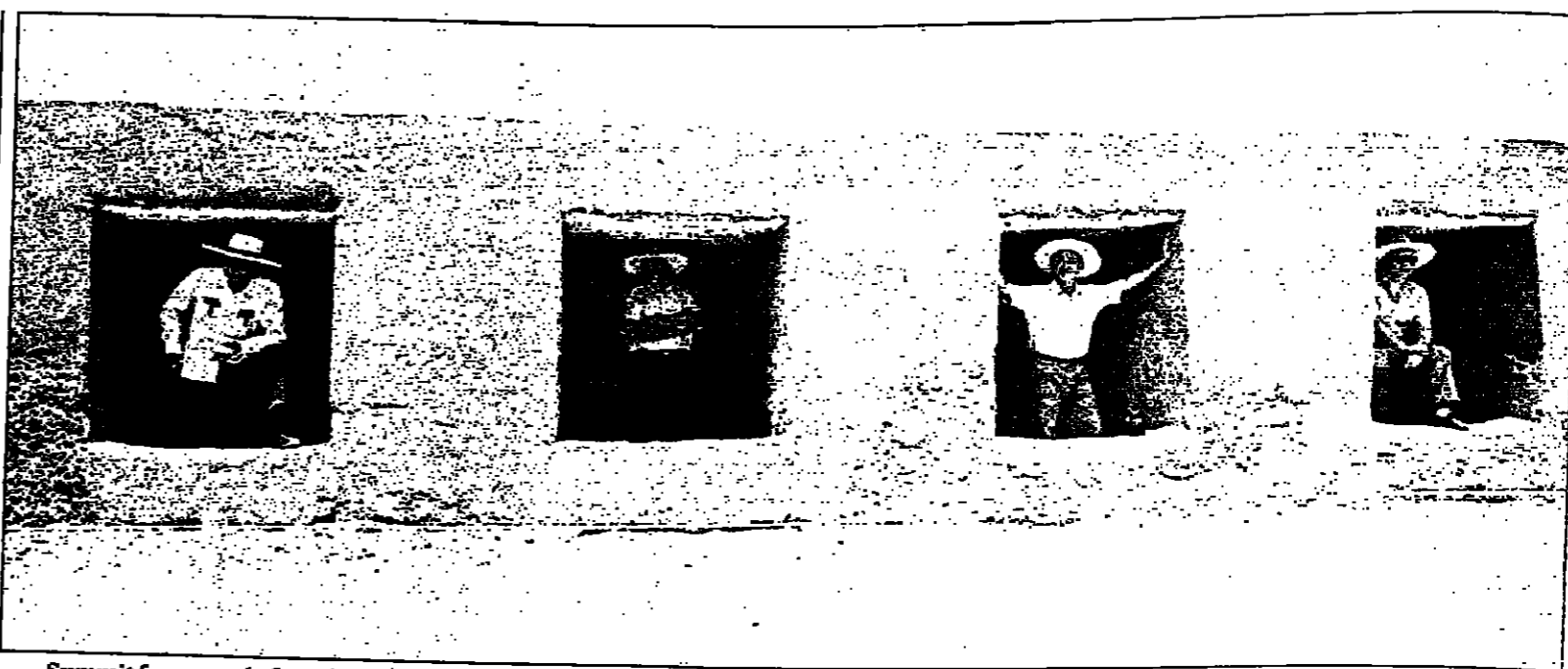
ministers meeting in Palermo at the weekend issued a sharp call to Iran to condemn terrorism directed at Israel. But the 15 ministers made clear that they would not back American demands to isolate Tehran.

The EU also called on Israel to reopen the borders of Gaza and the West Bank, closed since last week, as it was undermining Mr Arafat.

In the West Bank yesterday Qassam, the military wing of Hamas, vowed to resume its suicide attacks. The warning came after Mr Arafat met the CIA which presented him with a list of the five most wanted Hamas men in the West Bank and Gaza.

Later yesterday Mr Arafat's forces claimed it had arrested three key Hamas militants, among whom was Abdelkader Sattari, the commander of Qassam. In retaliation, Qassam said it was renewing its suicide operations and urged Mr Arafat to stop doing Israel's "dirty work".

Letters, page 17



Summit framework: from left, Presidents Duran of Ecuador, Samper of Colombia, Fujimori of Peru and Sánchez de Lozada of Bolivia at a pre-Incan citadel over the weekend. They, and Venezuela's Foreign Minister, Miguel Burelli, were in Peru for an Andean Pact gathering

MI5 traces network of Hamas funding

By Adrian Lee and Michael Evans

MI5 has uncovered a network of organisations in Britain raising funds for Palestinian causes which could be providing a vital lifeline to Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, whose attacks with suicide bombers have killed nearly 60 Israelis in the past two weeks.

One organisation, the Palestinians' Relief and Development Fund, also

called Interpal, a charity based in northwest London, has had its bank accounts temporarily frozen by the Charity Commissioners, although it has not been accused of sending money to Hamas.

Security sources, however, said yesterday that a number of other charities were involved in similar fundraising, possibly as many as half a dozen.

An Israeli diplomatic source in London said yesterday that Britain and Germany were the two main

European countries where Hamas fundraisers were operating.

The source said: "We have given clear information to the British Government. There is more going on here than people want to acknowledge publicly."

However, Essam Mustafa, vice-chairman of Interpal, said: "I am very angry that our name has been mentioned."

He said his organisation would continue to raise funds but denied its

money was falling into terrorists' hands. He said the charity was non-political but refused to condemn Hamas.

"It is not our job to condemn anyone but we are opposed to all violence," he said.

Yesterday as it emerged that the Government is considering new anti-terrorism laws, Moshe Raviv, the Israeli Ambassador in London, said Britain was "certainly part of the lifeline" to the Hamas terrorists.

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Voters in Iran back economic reforms

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

ECONOMIC reformers in Iran who back President Rafsanjani's policy of opening up the isolated state yesterday claimed victory over hardline conservatives as early results emerged from parliamentary elections.

The results were seen as an upset for the conservatives, who have used their predominance in the 270-seat parliament or Majlis, to slow Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani's free market reforms.

"Radical change in Majlis" and "New faces dominate Majlis" were the headlines in Iranian newspapers.

The partial results will provide some comfort to the President as Iran faces condemnation at Wednesday's anti-terrorism summit in Egypt over allegations of involvement in suicide bombings in Israel.

A spokesman for the pro-Rafsanjani Servants of Iran's Construction said: "Perhaps 75 per cent of all winners are our candidates." The group emerged only last month and is led by high-profile technocrats including four vice-presidents, the American-educated central bank governor and the President's daughter, Faerz Hashemi.

The President's gravest concern is that ties with Europe to offset a US trade ban are now in peril. The EU indicated yesterday that sanctions could be imposed unless Iran condemns "all acts of terrorism".

It said EU ministers would visit Tehran to "emphasise that if the dialogue is worth continuing it must show some progress on such fundamental issues as the Middle East peace process and terrorism".

Leading article, page 17

Mugabe motorcade raises little but dust

FROM JAN RAATH IN BULAWAYO

THE crowd of perhaps 300 people reacts as if a great charge of electricity has passed through it the moment the first of the 18 vehicles in the presidential motorcade comes speeding down the dust road.

Children, limp from waiting, heat and hunger, spring into an orderly line to wave party flags and grin. Soldiers in full combat kit sprint to positions around the clearing. The dark-suited security men almost outnumber the crowd.

The bullet-proof black Mercedes-Benz comes to a halt and from behind the limousine's black curtains emerges President Mugabe, acknowledging the adulation.

Although this is Matabeleland, where memories of the massacres by the Zimbabwe Army are still strong, the election posters are in Shona, the language of Mr Mugabe and most of the party hierarchy. Those who have been waiting are lucky the President has come, a secret policeman says. "If there were not enough people, I would tell him on this radio not to come."

Mr Mugabe's presidential campaign has come to shake up the village about 18 miles south of Bulawayo. The show has been on the road for six weeks now and is winding up for the two-day elections next weekend.

The contest is hopelessly unequal, Mr Mugabe facing token challenges from faded veterans, the Rev Ndabavangi Sithole and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, leader of the Rhodesian internal settlement in 1979. But Mr Mugabe is leaving nothing to chance and has thrown millions of dollars, much of it from state coffers, into a well-oiled campaign.

A plainclothes policeman notices me counting the number of vehicles in the motorcade, and demands to know why. "So you want to report negatively on Zimbabwe," he says. The contents of my wallet are minutely scrutinised, and the group of men in sunglasses swilling around me writes down details of my press card and my blood donor's card. An hour later they let me go.



Malan: cancer was found "four years ago"

Trial upset by Malan leukaemia

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH AFRICA'S biggest murder trial has taken a dramatic turn amid disclosures that General Magnus Malan, the former Defence Minister and the main defendant, has leukaemia.

A report in the Johannesburg *Sunday Times* disclosed yesterday that the general, who is due to appear in the Durban Supreme Court today, was diagnosed with the disease four years ago and has received treatment.

Late last year it was discovered that General Kat Liebenberg, a former head of the South African Defence Force and a co-accused, has prostate cancer.

General Malan, 66, and 19 others face murder and conspiracy to murder charges over a hit squad that allegedly assassinated ANC leaders.

He told the *Sunday Times*: "I don't want to play on anyone's sympathy. The case must run its course and my health is a personal matter."

However, questions will be asked about the physical impact of court proceedings on his health. Hearings have been set down for three months but are expected to last at least a year.

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Party divided on eve of Super Tuesday

Buchanan threatens to deny Dole his support

FROM IAN BRODIE IN DALLAS

PAT BUCHANAN unleashed a savage attack on Robert Dole yesterday, describing the Republican's presumptive presidential nominee as a hollow, duplicitous candidate who has no ideas and has sold out the middle class.

The conservative commentator, whose candidacy plummeted after his early win in New Hampshire, was so angry that he said he was not certain he would support Mr Dole when he takes on President Clinton in the autumn election.

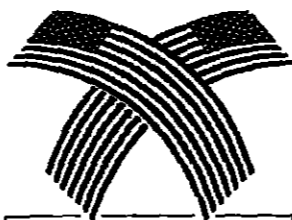
Mr Buchanan's outburst, in an interview with the Associated Press, was full of derisive comments about Mr Dole which will be a gift to the Democrats for the Clinton campaign.

Many analysts share the Buchanan view that Mr Dole has yet to make a convincing case that he should be President.

Mr Buchanan was speaking in the final run-up to "Super Tuesday" tomorrow, when seven states hold primaries for 362 delegates. Mr Dole, anticipating a clean sweep, refused to be drawn by Mr Buchanan's fusillade, saying he preferred to keep his focus on Mr Clinton.

The very mention of Mr Dole's name stoked anger in Mr Buchanan, who vowed to stay in the race and selectively target a few states, even if Mr Dole mathematically clinches the nomination with the required 996 delegates in the next few weeks. "What does Bob Dole stand for that we all ought to get behind?" Mr Buchanan asked. "The answer is: nothing."

The prospect of Republicans remaining divided after their convention in August is already alarming the party establishment.



US PRIMARIES

Mr Buchanan's fury can be traced to Mr Dole's attack in a commercial in New Hampshire describing him as "too extreme" to be President. Mr Buchanan complained that the advertisement stayed on the air for a week after Mr Dole had said it was being withdrawn. Mr Buchanan blamed the commercial and the party establishment's opposition to him for dimming his hopes of victory just as he had almost got to the top of the hill and over it.

"The nastiness and the duplicity of the Dole campaign and what he was doing really angered me and enraged me and disgusted me," Mr Buchanan said. "And those feelings don't change."

Mr Buchanan said he and Mr Dole used to be "very, very friendly". He had originally rejected his staff's advice to be tougher on Mr Dole because he wanted to win on ideas. If he lost, he did not want to damage Mr Dole's last chance, at the age of 72, of being President. Those good intentions can be said to have evaporated.

He insisted Mr Dole would need his help in winning middle-class and blue-collar support, saying the senator had "sold them out twice" by supporting higher taxes and trade deals. As to where else Mr Buchanan could go, he mentioned the new Reform Party, but its founder, the billionaire Ross Perot, has expressed no interest.

Mr Buchanan was caustic about leading Republicans who said they would not support him as the nominee, a group that includes Colin Powell, the retired general. He linked them to Mr Dole as "an empty, vapid, nothing establishment that is interested only in power. It has no ideas, no vision. It just wants its limousines back at any and all costs. The ethics with which it conducts its battles are disgusting."

Steve Forbes, the wealthy magazine publisher who is trailing badly, rejected Mr Dole's call to drop out of the race. He said he will hang on to try to force the Republicans to adopt his flat-tax proposal.

Morry Taylor, a wheel and tyre manufacturer, dropped out and endorsed Mr Dole after spending \$6.5 million (£4.2 million) of his own money on a campaign that collected only 7,000 votes and no delegates.

Clinton role: Hillary Clinton was not a passive investor in the Whitewater affair, but the key financial manager in a loan for the failed Arkansas land venture, it is claimed in an extract from a new book to be published by Time magazine today (Tom Rhodes writes).

The book says that the First Lady maintained a family investment in the Whitewater deal long after she and her husband were urged to get out by partners.

Much of what appears in *Blood Sport*, the eagerly-awaited account by James Stewart, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, is at odds with statements made under oath by President Clinton and his wife.

Clinton faces tough battle despite Republican split

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

ENCOURAGED by Republican Party divisions and Robert Dole's seemingly inevitable nomination, Washington's political southsayers and pollsters are predicting victory for Bill Clinton in November.

But political gurus at the White House are the first to acknowledge it would be wrong to make that assumption. There is no certainty of a third-party candidate, and the voting system, combined with an electoral map that has swung sharply against the Democrats in the past three years, suggests a two-way race that may bring open trench warfare for the Oval Office.

Eroded support in the South

has undermined a traditional power base and ensured the President must defend all the states he gained in 1992.

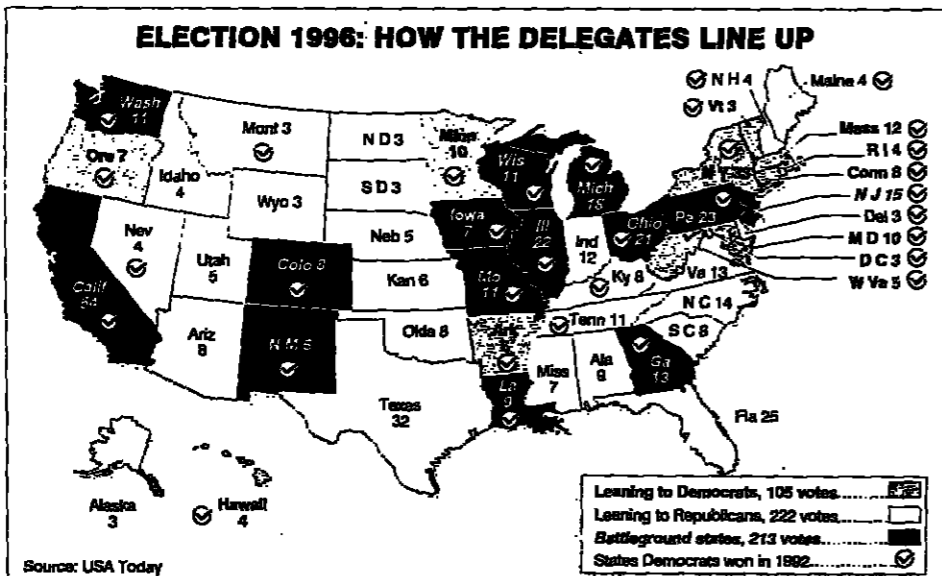
Under election rules, each state receives a number of delegates to the electoral college and the candidate with the highest vote wins all of those delegates. In 1992, for example, Ross Perot won 19 per cent of the national vote but no delegates. Mr Clinton gained only 43 per cent and won 370 delegates, well above the 270 needed to become President.

But none of the 18 states he lost then has returned to the Democratic fold and Mr Dole, should he win his party's nomination, can expect an

immediate base of 168 seats in the electoral college.

Polls suggest Georgia, Louisiana, Tennessee and Kentucky would be removed from the Democratic coalition and that 72 electoral college votes may be lost there. In Iowa, Nevada, Maine and the Rocky Mountain states. The remaining 23 states where Mr Clinton can triumph carry 298 votes. He is reasonably confident of taking 14 of those and the District of Columbia.

The other eight — California, New Jersey, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Wisconsin and Missouri — and their 175 delegates are the key to the election.



Baroness Thatcher speaking at Fulton, Missouri, on the fiftieth anniversary of the address by Churchill in which he launched the term "Iron Curtain"

Thatcher warns West of 'rogue state' dangers

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN FULTON, MISSOURI

THERE is no longer an Iron Curtain, but the world faces a more sinister and explosive situation in the combination of rogue states with weapons of mass destruction.

Baroness Thatcher said in a speech on Saturday at Westminster College, Fulton, where Churchill warned the West in 1946 of the coming Cold War.

She said in part: "When Soviet power broke down, it did the control it exercised, however fitfully and irresponsibly, over rogue states... The Soviet collapse has also aggravated the single most awesome threat of modern times: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These weapons... are today acquired by middle-income countries such as Iraq, Iran, Libya and Syria — acquired sometimes from other powers like China and South Korea, but most ominously from former Soviet

arsenals, or unemployed scientists, or from organised crime rings...

"All of northeast Asia, southeast Asia, much of the Pacific and most of Russia could soon be threatened by the latest North Korean missiles. Once they are available in the Middle East and North Africa, all the capitals of Europe will be within target range and, on present trends, a direct threat to American shores is likely to mature early in the next century."

"Add weapons of mass destruction to rogue states and you have a highly toxic compound. As the CIA has pointed out: 'Of the nations that have or are acquiring [such] weapons, many are led by megalomaniacs and strongmen of proven inhumanity or by weak, unstable or illegitimate governments.' In some instances, the potential capabilities at the command of these unpredictable figures is either equal to or even more destructive than the Soviet threat to the West in the 1960s... It is that serious..."

"Because the risk of total nuclear annihilation has been removed, we in the West have lapsed into an alarming complacency about the risks that remain. We have run down our defences and relaxed our guard..."

"Given the intellectual climate in the West today, it is probably unrealistic to expect military intervention to remove the source of the threat... That means the West must install effective ballistic missile defences which would protect us and our armed forces, reduce or even nullify the rogue state's arsenal, and enable us to retaliate."

Leading article, page 17

Legislators monkey with the teaching of evolution

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

DARWINISM is again under threat in America's Deep South, where a state legislature may soon permit schools to dismiss teachers who portray evolution as fact. The move, now in committee stage in the Tennessee senate, has evoked memories of the notorious 1925 "monkey trial".

In Alabama, biology textbooks must now carry inserted disclaimers which declare that evolution is simply "a controversial theory" and advise the pupil: "No one was present when life first appeared on Earth. Therefore, any statement about life's origins should be considered as theory, not fact."

In Georgia, the attorney-general has been asked to consider whether "creationism" — the belief that Earth is but a few thousand years old and that it was created in one bound by God — can be included in the high-school science curriculum.

The origin of man is enough of an issue for the fundamentalist Christian line to have been adopted by Pat Buchanan in his run for the White House and for Tennessee's Republican Governor to stall on expressing an opinion. Christian fundamentalists are alert to the threat biology teachers may present to a literal interpretation of the Old Testament.

Many teachers oppose the Tennessee Bill. Jerry Winters, for the Tennessee Education Association representing teachers, said: "The Bill would have a chilling effect on the curriculum."

This is not a religious issue but a teachers' rights issue. There are reports of teachers declining to mention the origin of man in class, for fear of attracting censure from devout parents, while others are rushing through that part of the curriculum before the law changes.

Supporters of the Tennessee Bill speak of an intolerance among teachers, and a responsibility to point out to children that Darwinism is only a theory.

A Tennessee state senator, David Fowler, said: "If evolution is true, then it has nothing to fear from some other theory being taught; the truth will prevail. But if intelligent design is the truth, then God forbid that we should not teach it to our children."

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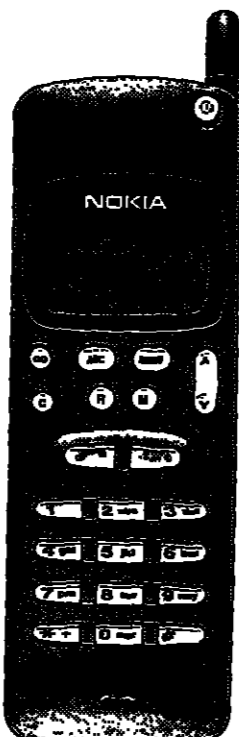
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China war games trigger aviation alert

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

CHINA is raising the stakes in its game of brinkmanship over Taiwan by launching large-scale amphibious exercises using live ammunition southwest of Taiwan tomorrow. The war games, which will be monitored by American naval forces, will seal off half the southern approach to the busy Taiwan Strait.

Taiwan's civil aviation authorities said yesterday more than 300 flights a day would have to change flight path. It said: "We consider the area near Communist China's exercises a danger zone."

Taiwanese government officials said China would be held responsible for any incidents in the live firing of Scud-like missiles into the sea close to Taiwan's two main ports.

Taiwan's President, Lee Teng-hui, 73, who has triggered Peking's fury, said yesterday that Taiwanese should remain confident despite the storm. He was campaigning for the island's presidential elections on March 23.

On Saturday, after China announced its live-fire exercises in the strait, President Lee declared in a television address: "I want to emphasise that force and threats will not obstruct our pursuit of democracy, freedom and dignity."

Peking believes Mr Lee, who is poised to win the presidential election, will lead the island to independence. He represents the Kuomintang (Nationalist) party which set up government on the island after it lost the civil war with the Communists in 1949.

Mr Lee has maintained that he believes in one China, but that the mainland Government needs to be more democratic. "The aim of Communism is to interfere with the elections and reduce the votes of the President," he said. China says its war games are designed to warn the "renegade province" not to push for independence.

American has condemned the missile drill as "reckless". William Perry, the Defence Secretary, said a US guided-missile destroyer and a surveillance aircraft were monitoring the exercises.

□ Hong Kong: Gyaincain Norbu, the boy of six China has designated as the eleventh Panchen Lama, the second-highest Tibetan monk, participated in his first religious ceremony over the weekend (Jonathan Mirskey writes.) It was held in a Tibetan monastery in Peking where the child has lived since his installation last year.

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Fire across the Taiwan Strait as China flexes its military muscles — Rodewalt's view in the Calgary Herald

Cuts wreck institute's Commonwealth party

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

THE Commonwealth Institute will be unable to celebrate Commonwealth Day today because it says the Foreign Office has ordered it to close its exhibition galleries as a cost-cutting measure.

With the Foreign Office and the institute at loggerheads over its future the Queen will, ironically, mark the day with a speech calling on people to work in partnership with one another.

The institute also predicts that it could be forced to close altogether next year — the year Britain hosts the next Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting. The institute says the Foreign Office has ordered that it become self-financing by April 1997, two years earlier than the date originally set by the Government. However, the Foreign Office in effect accuses the institute of getting its facts wrong. It says the institute was originally told to become self-financing by 1995, and that the Government was generous in agreeing to extend the deadline until next year. The institute insists that it was given until 1999 to become self-supporting, and that moving the date forward means that it now faces total closure.

And whereas the institute says it was forced to close its exhibition galleries following "a directive from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office", the Foreign Office says the galleries were due to close anyway in January for refurbishment.

Stephen Cox, Director-General of the institute, said: "That suggestion is ludicrous. We would never close all the galleries at the same time and I can show you the letter ordering us to close. The galleries are now closed for the foreseeable future."

The Foreign Office also says the institute, which occupies a Grade II listed building in Kensington High Street, London, is being "premature" in predicting its early demise. "We have given them plenty of time. It is now up to them to source their own funding," a government spokesman said yesterday.

A spokeswoman for the institute, which is officially a museum established by an Act of Parliament, said: "The staff are going to be absolutely devastated that we are not taking part in Commonwealth Day. There are usually several hundred schoolchildren here, enjoying themselves and absorbing the message about the principles of the Commonwealth."

The institute has already suffered severe cuts, with government funding plunging from £2.8 million in 1995-1996 to £995,000 allocated for 1996-1997. Staff numbers have fallen from

96 in 1993 to 26. In her Commonwealth Day message, the Queen says: "A successful partnership depends on mutual respect and friendship, and what matters is not what people are, but what they can contribute to the common purpose."

The message, distributed to schools in Britain and throughout the Commonwealth, is due to be read aloud in the presence of the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh by Chief Emeka Anyaoku, the Commonwealth Secretary-General, at a multi-faith ceremony in Westminster Abbey later today.

"The Commonwealth is an excellent example of this kind of partnership. The 53 sovereign nations who belong to it have vastly different social and ethnic traditions, but it has been able to fashion unity out of this diversity," the Queen says.

Queen's message, page 18

Wounded Russians beg a lift out of sniper-plagued Grozny

THE young, unshaven face stared out nervously from the sand-bagged position and beckoned us forward, while another sentry trained his machinegun on our car.

The bloody flare-up of fighting in the heart of the Chechen capital has left Russian troops in such a precarious position that they had to seek the help of foreign journalists to evacuate their wounded over the weekend. Many of the Chechen fighters may have slipped away from their miserable capital, but for the outpost of Russian troops at Position No 4 the soldiers were taking no chances. "We lost several men to the Chechens, so we cannot be too careful," said Andrei, a haggard



Tattered uniforms, squalid garrisons and little medical help for the injured: Richard Beeston in Grozny watches the war-weary Russians desperately trying to keep Chechen rebels at bay

junior officer who looked as though he had not slept since Chechen rebels launched their lightning raid on Grozny last week.

Housed in a once elegant building that used to serve as a kindergarten, the outpost bore the familiar characteristics of the squalid garrisons based in this troublesome corner of the Russian empire. Discarded tins and empty

bottles of vodka littered the muddy ground, while demoralised conscripts in tattered uniforms scanned the rooftops of neighbouring buildings for the elusive snipers who daily torment their lives.

Although the base houses several dozen Interior Ministry troops and is the headquarters for the Russian military in the northwestern sector of the city, it was stranded in a no-man's-land dur-

ing the fiercest fighting Grozny has seen in more than a year.

First the position's water supply and electricity were cut, then it began to run low on food, and finally the soldiers discovered to their horror that they were sealed off from other Russian units by Chechen gunmen concealed in residential neighbourhoods.

"We were told to come here and help to restore order in the city but instead we found ourselves in the thick of a full-scale war," said Colonel Aleksandr, an affable career soldier whose resources are stretched to the limit.

"I do not mind fighting, that is what I am trained for. But three of my men died because nobody came to evacuate them to safety.

You are the first people we have seen from outside the base in four days."

To emphasise the plight of his forgotten outpost, he swallowed his military pride and asked foreign journalists whether they would use their armoured car to ferry his wounded soldiers to safety and if he could borrow their satellite communications to let the families of his men know they were still alive.

When it was agreed to take away the wounded a virtual stampede of young, injured men clamoured around the car for what was clearly their only hope of escaping Grozny and receiving the medical treatment they urgently require. For those young soldiers who

managed to get out of Chechnya, their contribution to this unpopular conflict is probably over for good.

Elsewhere in the capital less fortunate Russian troops have the task of trying to reimpose their authority over a largely hostile population, which has repeatedly rebelled against Moscow's rule.

Near the city centre squads of soldiers driving at full speed in armoured personnel carriers dispersed across the devastated streets over the weekend in a huge operation to flush out the last rebel strongholds.

Although the sound of automatic weapons fire and the explosion of grenades suggested that they were carrying out their mission

with zeal, few if any rebel gunmen were killed or captured in the noisy display of force.

Certainly at Position No 4, the men were in no doubt that the Chechens would one day reappear to challenge, and possibly break, their shaky hold over the city.

Casualty figures from the latest fighting are still unclear, but the Interfax news agency last night quoted an official from the Russian-backed Chechen Government as saying that about 100 civilians had died.

Earlier reports had said that 70 Interior Ministry troops had been killed and 40 were missing. The ministry said that 170 of about 1,800 Chechen fighters had been killed and 100 injured.

Britain and France block Maastricht role for Euro-MPs

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN PALERMO

EUROPE had a foretaste of the hard bargaining it can expect at the forthcoming Maastricht review yesterday when France and Britain joined forces to block an attempt by the rest of the European Union to give the European Parliament a role in the negotiations.

The relaxed surroundings of a seaside hotel in Sicily did little to nurture a compromise among Foreign Ministers over an issue which the majority of European states see as going to the heart of the Union's failure to inspire the trust of its citizens. Germany and the 12 other EU states want to involve the Parliament in the inter-governmental conference (IGC) opening in Turin on March 29.

The conference will spend more than a year revamping the treaty for the next century, and all EU members except Britain and France argue that, as an elected body, the Parliament would add democratic legitimacy to the task, helping to avert the public opinion disaster of the original Maastricht negotiations.

Britain and France, the two states most opposed to any increase in the Parliament's powers, insist that it has no role in government negotia-

tions. Joining forces, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, and Hervé de Charette, his French counterpart, refused to accept a compromise proposal, put forward by the Italians, that would have required the Parliament to be kept closely informed on the IGC talks. Instead they insisted that the Parliament's representatives should be briefed only once every few weeks.

A similar mechanism operated in the Maastricht round. "No one suggested any logical reason why the European Parliament should be party to the negotiations," Mr Rifkind said. Expressing a rare Anglo-French accord, M de Charette said: "By definition it is a negotiation between governments and the Parliament has no place there."

He added that he was sure matters would be settled to ensure a smooth launch for the IGC when heads of state open the conference at a lunch in Turin. But Klaus Kinkel, the German minister, made no secret of his annoyance. "It is not very encouraging if Foreign Ministers are incapable of reaching an agreement on this kind of thing," he said, adding: "The French and the British proposed a compromise that would not be accept-

able to the Parliament. Germany will not accept any compromise if it is not acceptable by the European Parliament." Officials said the issue would be discussed at the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Brussels on March 25.

Carlos Westendorp, the acting Spanish Foreign Minister, who chaired the EU's main preparatory group for the IGC, said it was essential for the Parliament to be brought into the talks so that Europe's citizens could understand what was going on. "If we do not succeed in having European Parliament representatives with us, we are going to fail," he said. Euro-MPs played a full part in Señor Westendorp's preparatory group which laid out the issues the IGC will face but was not a negotiating forum.

Many MEPs are threatening to obstruct the new treaty if the Parliament is not given observer status at the talks and allowed to express its opinions. Hans van Mierlo, the Dutch Foreign Minister, said the issue was an important symbol, adding: "It is not a very good signal when we trip over a symbol."

Italy, which now holds the EU presidency, will seek a new compromise and bring it



Susanna Agnelli, left, the Italian Foreign Minister, in conversation with Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, on a sightseeing trip to Monreale, near Palermo, the Sicilian capital, before yesterday's talks

to the next Foreign Ministers' meeting. Nations also face a tussle over the make-up of the European Commission, where small nations have one representative while Germany, France, Italy, Britain and Spain have two each.

The squabble over the Parliament offers a snapshot of the conflict that can be expected between the more federal-minded majority of the EU

members, led by Germany, and the minority, dominated by Britain, which is reluctant to yield any more national power to the EU's centralised institutions. With the Franco-German alliance under strain, London and Paris are likely to make common cause in several areas at the IGC, highlighting their attachment to national sovereignty.

Britain is to issue its own

agenda for the IGC when the Government produces its White Paper on Tuesday. Mr Rifkind also said he expected to finish work this week on an analysis requested by John Major on the pros and cons of a referendum on whether Britain should join monetary union (EMU). But he refused to be drawn on his conclusions and said the study would make no recommendations

but merely set out options. EMU is not on the agenda at the IGC, although it could be brought into play when the negotiators discuss calls by several member states, the European Parliament and the Commission for commitments on job creation to be included in the new treaty.

Peter Riddell, page 16
Letters, page 17

Mladic and Karadzic defy atrocity tribunal

BY EVE-ANN PRENTICE
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

RADOVAN KARADZIC, the Bosnian Serb leader, and his commander, General Ratko Mladic, both accused of being war criminals, yesterday vowed to resist attempts to arrest them and bring them before the war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

"They have to understand I come at a great cost and that the people depend on me," General Mladic told a private Greek television channel near Pale in Bosnia. In another show of defiance, General Mladic was later spotted skiing in the mountains overlooking the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo.

Dr Karadzic said it would take more than the entire Nato-run peacekeeping force in Bosnia to arrest him. "They will need many more troops than they have right now. I think they are not capable of doing this without terrible losses from both sides," he said.

"I am going to travel whenever I feel that I need to travel. I do not know how long this farce of a court at The Hague will last."

Hundreds of Serbs held a rally in Doboj, north Bosnia, to back their leadership, a Peace Implementation Force spokesman said.

Srebrenica witness, page 15

King sues Corfu over his palace

FROM JOHN CARR
IN ATHENS

KING CONSTANTINE of Greece is suing the town council of Corfu for trespassing on the Greek Royal Family's summer palace on the island.

Several years ago the Socialist council opened the disused palace — the birthplace of the Duke of Edinburgh — on the grounds that the property of the abolished monarchy belonged to "the people". The palace, known as Mon Repos, has since been used as a venue for cultural events sponsored by the municipality.

However, works of art left in the palace by the King when he was forced to flee Greece 29 years ago, have been looted and it appears there has been no attempt to track down those responsible.

According to reports here, the King, 55, who lives in London, has filed a suit in the Corfu Court of First Instance, pressing his claim as the rightful owner of Mon Repos, and asked the court to ban all trespassing, cultural events and archaeological excavations in the palace grounds. A decision is expected in a few months. The council has not commented.

Sceptics court trouble by tackling judges

BY GEORGE BROCK

IMAGINE that you are President Chirac of France and that you are having a snooze. You are dreaming about Europe.

It is the usual nightmare: the Eurocrats of Brussels, guided by the free trade ayatollah Sir Leon Brittan, are determined to end barriers and subsidies that bend the rules in favour of some of France's biggest and most prestigious companies. Air France, after being condemned by the European Court of Justice, will have to stop molycoddling its staff.

French Telecom must face competition. Electricité de France will have to plug into the energy market. In short, the Anglo-Saxon barbarians are at the gate. It is the end of La France as you know it.

But — *incroyable* — help materialises from the most improbable quarter. British Euro-sceptics force London into refusing to obey judgments of the Luxembourg court. And, if the rules cannot be enforced in Britain, why should France worry? The President sleeps untroubled.

This fantasy is closer to the truth than many Tory MPs might think, and they should consider carefully the court's future as they digest the Government's White Paper tomorrow. The Euro-sceptics, who spent much of last week fulminating about the inequi-

ties foisted on Britain by Luxembourg, have it all upside down: not only does Britain need the court now, but it will want the backing of European Union law even more crucially in the future.

The judges have often seen themselves as duty bound to promote a federalist agenda. But they also umpire the rules which businesses like British Airways and British Telecom need for a level playing sur-

face in Europe. British Airways is not suing the European Commission over the legality of subsidies to Air France for the fun of it. That case is a weapon in the way to prevent Paris from warping competition between airlines. British businesses use the court to open new markets.

Almost every week, new designs for a more flexible EU are floated. The old idea that it could only creep towards a

federal future is losing its grip. Most of the new ideas assume that there will be a "core" at the heart of the EU, subscribing to freedoms of the single market which involve and bind every state. Outside that, smaller groups of states will be able to agree on special policies of their own, such as forming a single currency.

The problems of making such a design work are great, but Britain has a strong interest in seeing the snags overcome. If Britain stays out of a monetary union, British businesses would still want to operate in the market and not be discriminated against. The more complex the next EU system, the more pivotal the role of its supreme court.

Odd as it seems, in the wake of the £30 million award to Spanish fishermen, Britain has a stake in the court's survival. In a flexible EU, the rule of law will be supreme. Markets come under unrelenting political attack and improving the quality of the court is one of the best defences.

The fact that the court works poorly from time to time is a reason to knuckle down to the hard work of reforming it, not a reason to destroy it. The Euro-sceptics, who whip up fear and loathing of the court, are too short-sighted to see the danger of what they are doing.



Report puts Sorbonne at bottom of class

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE Sorbonne, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in France, has received a damning report card from a government panel which claims that the 700-year-old seat of learning is badly run, overcrowded and academically below standard.

A 150-page assessment by the National Evaluation Committee found that the Sorbonne's examination results "place this establishment on the bottom rung of French universities". *Le Journal du Dimanche* reported yesterday.

The university, founded in 1257 by the theologian Robert de Sorbon to provide religious instruction for poor students, was originally located between the Panthéon and the Place St Michel, but

the Sorbonne is now divided between a dozen different sites scattered around Paris.

The report noted the "deplorable situation" of the university's libraries and observed that "the teachers and their students often lack the most elementary facilities... in many classes there are not enough seats for everyone".

Commenting on the university's lukewarm reception of the criticism, the report adds: "The conviction that it possesses, illustrates, predisposes the excellence did not predispose the Sorbonne to appreciate either the necessity or the use of the evaluation."

The president of the Sorbonne has

rejected the more critical parts of the report, but teachers at the university say the assessment is largely correct.

"It is permanent war here. There is no democratic life and the president governs with a veritable soviet," one history teacher said.

Curie's legacy: Parents of pupils at a school in east Paris claim radiation is leaking from a nuclear waste dump beneath the building's foundations left behind by Marie Curie, the great Polish-born French scientist. The Marie Curie school at Nogent-sur-Marne was built in 1909 on the site where Marie Curie and her husband, Pierre, extracted radium from 1,200 tonnes of uranium ore, beginning in 1904.

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ARTS THE WEEK AHEAD

VISUAL ART

Off the wall:
graffiti by
Jean-Michel Basquiat
goes on show at
the Serpentine
OPEN: Now
REVIEW: Tomorrow



JAZZ

The pianist
Chick Corea
brings his new
Acoustic Quartet
to the Barbican
GIG: Tonight
REVIEW: Wednesday



BOOKS

The life of the
ill-starred
Caroline is
surveyed in
The Unruly Queen
IN THE SHOPS: Now
REVIEW: Thursday



THEATRE

The stage version
of *Trainspotting*
returns for a
West End run at
the Whitehall
OPENS: Thursday
REVIEW: Saturday

POP

Here today at least

ROBBIE Williams's departure from Take That last summer can be seen, with a touch of 20-20 hindsight, as the first wheel to come off a vehicle that would soon veer out of control. But in another lucrative corner of the youth market, Eternal's engine trouble that same season has righted itself entirely.

Their future was apparently threatened when Louise Nurdling amicably flew the coop, but the group has pared to a three-piece without missing a beat. Eternal's second album, *Power of a Woman*, is becoming as hit-laden as its million-selling predecessor, *Always & Forever*. Louise, meanwhile, is now two hits into her solo career.

With nine Top 15 singles since their launch in 1993, Eternal's act now has sophistication and sureness, plus an opulent set and ten-piece band.

Eternal
Fairfield Halls,
Croydon

Sometimes berated for making bland, no-risk discs, Eternal move on stage — as they make their recordings — with a professionalism that would be more readily applauded in a visiting soul act. Indeed, in the current hit *Good Thing* they have a workout soulful enough to take on the American R'n'B market on its own terms.

At home, they remain wholesome fare for a live audience that starts at around the age of seven and joins in every chorus of what has become a polished package of hits. Easter Bennett continues to steer their vocal course, but as on the last tour, Vennie Bennett takes an assured solo and Kelle Bryan contributes an alluring version of Janet Jackson's *Black Cat*.

The trio's turn as three of her brothers, in a Jackson Five medley complete with Afro wigs and check trousers, is an unnecessary cabaret touch. But in a business in which "eternal" popularity usually means something that just about makes it around the calendar, Croydon's soul sisters are building something more durable.

PAUL SEXTON

France's awful new library makes us feel better about ours, says Marcus Binney

Books, yes; looks, never

The French call it the Trés Grand Bibliothèque, architecture's counterpart to the TGV or train à grande vitesse. But, unlike the infamous British Library, shortly to be the subject of another scathing report from the National Audit Office, France's new national library has been completed on time. The architect, Dominique Perrault, handed over the keys of the building a year ago, less than four years after construction began. President Mitterrand formally inaugurated the new library a week later and the first readers will walk through the doors this autumn.

The second big difference between it and the British version is that you can see where the money has been spent — all £1.2 billion of it. By any standards the building, at Tolbiac in Paris's 13th arrondissement, is vast, inside and out. But here any praise must end, for architecturally the TGB is an abysmal performance: overbearing, vacuous, grim, repetitive and dispiriting.

The fatal flaw is an infantile obsession with absolute symmetry. Both inside and out, one half of the building is an exact mirror-image of the other. What should stun or delight the eye merely fatigues it. Even the four identical towers — pretty enough in the model — fail to compose well, either close to, or in the long views across the River Seine.

Worse still are the steps. Rarely since the pyramids of Ancient Egypt has an architect had the opportunity to design a more grandiose outdoor staircase. The whole building is one gigantic temple podium, 36 steps high on the riverside. But the steps, although they stretch to the horizon, are meanly designed, each tread being both too high and too shallow, so that it is difficult to walk up with ease or pleasure.

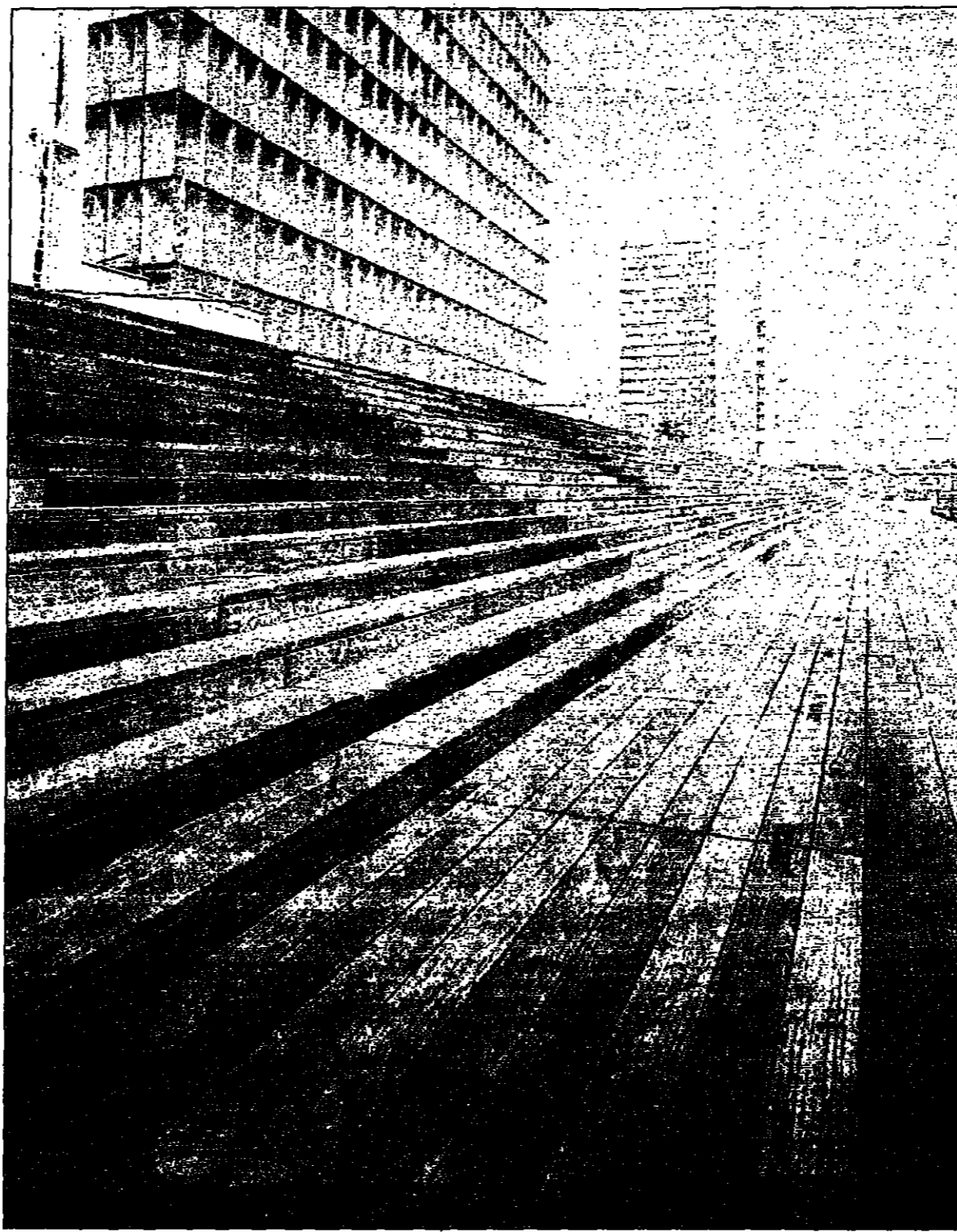
Heaven help anyone arriving for the first time in the rain. They will walk half the length of Piccadilly to get from one end to the other. And if they mount the steps there is still a windswept plaza to cross, ensuring that they will be completely soaked. In fact, this is a library designed for the car-borne, with 1,050 parking spaces for visitors and 750 for the staff. It would be unthinkable in London.

Crossing the great podium, you come to the TGB's one architectural marvel: a vast, rectangular sunken courtyard hollowed out 25ft beneath the level of the Seine. Remarkably, it is planted with trees 40 or 50 feet high. The architect went to the woods and selected each one, "I was told. But these are trees that raced each other to the sky in thick woodland. Most have no lower branches and a little bush on top."

Being conifers, many are unlikely now to grow lower branches, even though they now have more space. Instead, the whole garden is thick with guy wires holding these specimens in place. As a result, the public is to be denied the pleasure of entering this vast garden.

We know that the architect's bizarre notion was to put the books in the towers and the readers effectively underground. You descend via escalators down the most sepulchral of all staircase halls. There is no natural light and the walls are entirely hung with a modern-day version of chainmail. If it shimmered, it might have a strange beauty, but like everything else in this building it is uniform and monotonous.

The podium has two main levels, for



"The steps are both too high and too shallow, so that it is difficult to walk up with ease or pleasure"

the general public and for researchers. A great boon of the TGB is that it is to be open, on payment of a fee, to everyone over 18. There are 1,650 readers' places and open access to 400,000 books and 5,000 periodicals.

Continue down and you come to the research library, with nearly 2,000 places. Alas, merely to look along the 80yd corridors that flank the courtyard is to wish they were equipped with travelators. There is nothing to look at but the light fittings, and these are of course exactly the same, as perfectly erect and in line as any Prussian sergeant-major could desire. The only hope is that some free spirit of a librarian will cover walls and windows with posters and hang a forest of banners from the ceiling.

Every great library deserves a great reading room. The British Library has its glorious domed rotunda, soon to be relinquished, while in Paris the existing Bibliothèque Nationale has

Labrousse's virtuoso Salle de Lecture, covered with iron and glass saucer domes.

The TGB has nothing to compare with these, just a series of rectangular salons (identical of course) where you can admire the ultra-smooth grey concrete, steel grille ceilings and the expanses of African veneer. A Norman Foster building, however insistently grey, has a wonderful quality of light whatever the weather. Here such luminosity is entirely lacking.

The best part of the TGB is the part the public will not see. Go to the book delivery point and the ingenious overhead railway that delivers the books along four miles of rails is carefully screened from view. The books are placed in wagonettes, circular containers the size of a car wheel, each with pockets for ten books. These are ingeniously designed so the inner case always remains upright, whatever the angle of the outer one on its long

journey from the top of the tower to the bowels of the building. The promised book delivery time is an excellent 20 minutes, with the added bonus that you can reserve a seat and order up books in advance by telephone, fax, Minitel or the Internet.

If you think that there will have to be an awful lot of staff bobbing round at the different levels of the towers you are right. The TGB has a staff of 1,200-strong. As I completed my tour of the TGB I remember Gauthier's verdict on the Escorial: "The dullest and most dismal building imagined for the mortification of men... few people come back. If by chance they are English they blow their brains out."

Philip II's palace monastery may be severe but it is great architecture. The TGB could have been whisked up on the computer by a schoolboy. Draw one corner and the computer will just complete the rest. It would look better still in Lego.

Still setting his own pace

FINE personal judgment has allowed Alfredo Kraus to keep on singing and ensure the devotion of his considerable fan club. The Spanish tenor will be 69 in September and this year he celebrates 40 years of leading roles in the opera house: he never had to sing minor ones.

Throughout his career he has been meticulous about what he takes on, refusing to tackle parts that he reckoned might be unsuitable and dropping those such as Don Otavio, which were dramatically unrewarding. The result has been a small but impeccable repertoire and the ability to continue to fill Covent Garden by himself.

Or not quite by himself. For Thursday's recital at the Royal Opera House the singer brought with him not only his excellent accompanist Edelmiro Arnaltes, but also a young cello player, Asier Polo.

In between arias and groups of songs pianist and cellist combined in salon pieces such as Elgar's *Salut d'amour* and in frothy Spanish numbers, including Casado's *Requiebro*. Kraus, astute planner that he is, could take a rest and argue that the cello really does come into its own in Federico's *Lament* from Cilea's *L'Arlesiana*, a favourite piece of his for ending a recital.

Kraus began conventionally with Scarlatti and Gluck, numbers to warm up the voice. There were two songs by his much-loved Obradors, but before them came a curious piece about a miner injured in a pit blast. This struck a sombre and explosive note in a first half which reached its apex in Massenet's *Ouvre tes yeux bleus*.

Kraus has always excelled in the works of that composer, especially as Werther, but Des Grieux's *Ah! fuyez, douce*

Alfredo Kraus
Covent Garden

image, which opened the second half, found him a little below par. Phrases which might have been given their full sheen a few years ago were dextrously elided on this occasion.

But Gounod's *Roméo (Ah! lève-toi soleil)* found him back in thrilling voice, his tenor cutting clean through the house. Even better was Edgardo's *Fra poco* from *Lucia di Lammermoor* with each syllable and note precisely articulated. Kraus has always been a supreme Donizetti singer, and it was in this opera that he made his Covent Garden debut in 1959. May he be back when that fortieth anniversary comes round.

For this visit, though, there were four encores, all songs. Opera is strictly and wisely rationed nowadays.

JOHN HIGGINS



Kraus, at 68, he takes no chances with his voice

SONDHEIM ON DISC

A guide to the best available recordings, presented in conjunction with Radio 3

THE BEST OF
STEPHEN SONDHEIM
by David Benedict

With the British premiere of *Passion* at the end of this month, London theatregoers will have the luxury of being able to choose from three of Stephen Sondheim's finest musicals. His career in the commercial theatre has been marked by critical acclaim but not always with commercial success, and many have sniped that it is a case of "nice songs, shame about the show".

Whether or not you believe this adage, his work has been well represented on disc from his days as lyric writer on *West Side Story* (original cast recording) and *Gypsy* (Broadway cast recording) right up to the original cast recording of *Passion* (Broadway cast).

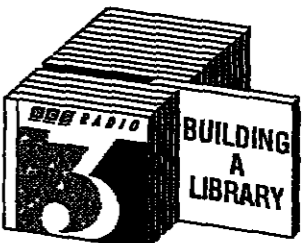
His first show as both lyricist and composer, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, is best represented by the London cast recording, which features a suitably fruity Frankie Howard as Pseudolus the slave in a plot that inspired *Up Pompeii*. Silly and fun, it's a world away from *Anyone Can Whistle*, which was a spectacular flop but has a tremendous score, much of which has only just been made available, thanks to a gala benefit performance on Sony Classical.

Next month, the cast album of the current London revival of *Company* will be released, but its reduced orchestration and uneven casting cannot begin to match the sheer lustre, shine and diamond-like sparkle of the London cast recording from 1972, with Larry Kert and the magnetic rasp of the matchless Elaine Stritch tearing into *The Ladies Who Lunch*. She is also one of the undoubted highlights of the gala concert performance.

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Into the Woods, on the other hand, is peerlessly performed by the London cast from Richard Jones's sensational, award-winning production. The details positively leap from the loudspeakers, thanks to the quality of the interpretations. But the documentation on the disc is woe, so track down the libretto elsewhere.

CDs can be obtained from Dress Circle Records, 57-59 Monmouth Street, Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9DG (0171-240 2227; 0171-836 8279; fax 0171-379 8540). Next Saturday on Radio 3 (9am): Liza's Les Préludes



of *Follies* on RCA. It has all the problems of a live performance in terms of variable sound quality, but the sense of occasion is palpable and the two-disc set gives other versions from the memory.

Judi Dench is currently stacking up awards for her heart-breaking performance as Desires in *A Little Night Music*, but there are no definite plans to record the National Theatre production. Happily, Glynn Johns in the original Broadway cast will more than suffice in this elegant, Ravel-inspired score.

Royal National Theatre Mother Courage and her Children

by Bertolt Brecht
In a new version by David Hare



"Brecht's greatest play has received one of the greatest productions it has ever had, or is ever likely to have, from Jonathan Kent... Diana Rigg gives the most tremendous performance of her career" Sunday Times

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Donizetti back in some style

OPERA

Don Pasquale
Coliseum

IN RECENT years lighter Italian pieces — or French, for that matter — have played little part in repertoire planning at English National Opera, whose masters have concentrated their minds, and ours, on sterner stuff. Which is one reason for welcoming this revival of Donizetti's joyful and touching comedy.

Another reason is a conductor, Michael Lloyd, who really understands the Donizetti idiom, another rarity in St Martin's Lane. Lloyd drew consistently clear, bright sound from the alert orchestra, which is by no means easy in a theatre as resonant as the Coliseum, relishing the piquancy of the instrumentation. He also fielded just the right amount of nuance and supple rubato, allowing music that looks so simple on the page to exert its full Mediterranean warmth. This was first-rate music-making.

The singers, then, had the most helpful of springboards from which to launch their vocal pyrotechnics. Mary Hegarty's Norina skipped and knifed effortlessly above the



Donald Adams: born to sing the role of Don Pasquale

stave, the notes and lines complementing her delightful, sharply knowing stage persona. Alan Oyle was the very personification of suave charm as Malatesta.

Any inclination to describe Neill Archer as an "English" tenor is scotched by the way his tone expands the higher he goes; quite the opposite of the way the throats of so many of that breed tighten in panic. The warm glow of his voice in the upper reaches, which is where poor Ernesto spends most of the opera, was quite lovely, with only a hint of strain towards the end of the murderous Act II scene.

As for Donald Adams's first

Pasquale, well, reference books suggest that he will not see 65 again, and it seems doty that he should have had to wait so long before being asked to tackle a role he might have been born to sing. Even though not in the most robust vocal health last Friday, every

line — and, of course, every word — came across with diamond clarity. And despite an outside stage presence, he is the canniest of underplayers. His is a very funny, very touching impersonation.

If only this quartet, and Donizetti, could be left to get on with it. But Patrick Mason's updated production, bursting with tiresome sight-gags and supernumeraries, suggests less than complete faith in the work. Making Norina and Malatesta play their scene in the company of three waiters, two tourists, three eavesdroppers and a Lambretta is pretty yawn-inducing. But when Mason actually directs the piece, it works. Norina's slap, the pause held to breaking point, and Adams's pianissimo "All is over, Don Pasquale" was worthy of one of the truly epic moments in operatic comedy. On balance, a show to catch.

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Anjana Ahuja reports on the part-timers who hunt for heavenly bodies

When Nicky Fleet gets home after a long day deciphering tax returns, she settles down to her night job — helping to unravel the mysteries of the cosmos with the aid of a home-made telescope in her back garden.

Mrs Fleet, 36, an executive with the Inland Revenue, from Reading, Berkshire, is a member of Britain's army of 3,000 amateur astronomers. Most have day jobs which have absolutely nothing to do with astronomy and yet, constantly, they sacrifice their spare time in the name of science. Despite the "amateur" tag it is serious stuff; astronomy is one of the few areas of science where the professionals trust — and even rely on — the amateurs.

"Professionals can't keep an eye on the whole sky," Ian Ridpath, an amateur astronomer and astronomy writer, explains. "Without the amateurs, a lot of things would be missed."

However, front-page discoveries — say a comet or supernova (exploding star) — are extremely rare. So why do people bother? "I'm interested in the way things work and I dislike mystery," Mrs Fleet says. "Looking up at the sky also gives me a sense of perspective. In life and work, problems often seem insuperable, but compared to the mysteries of the cosmos they become trivial."

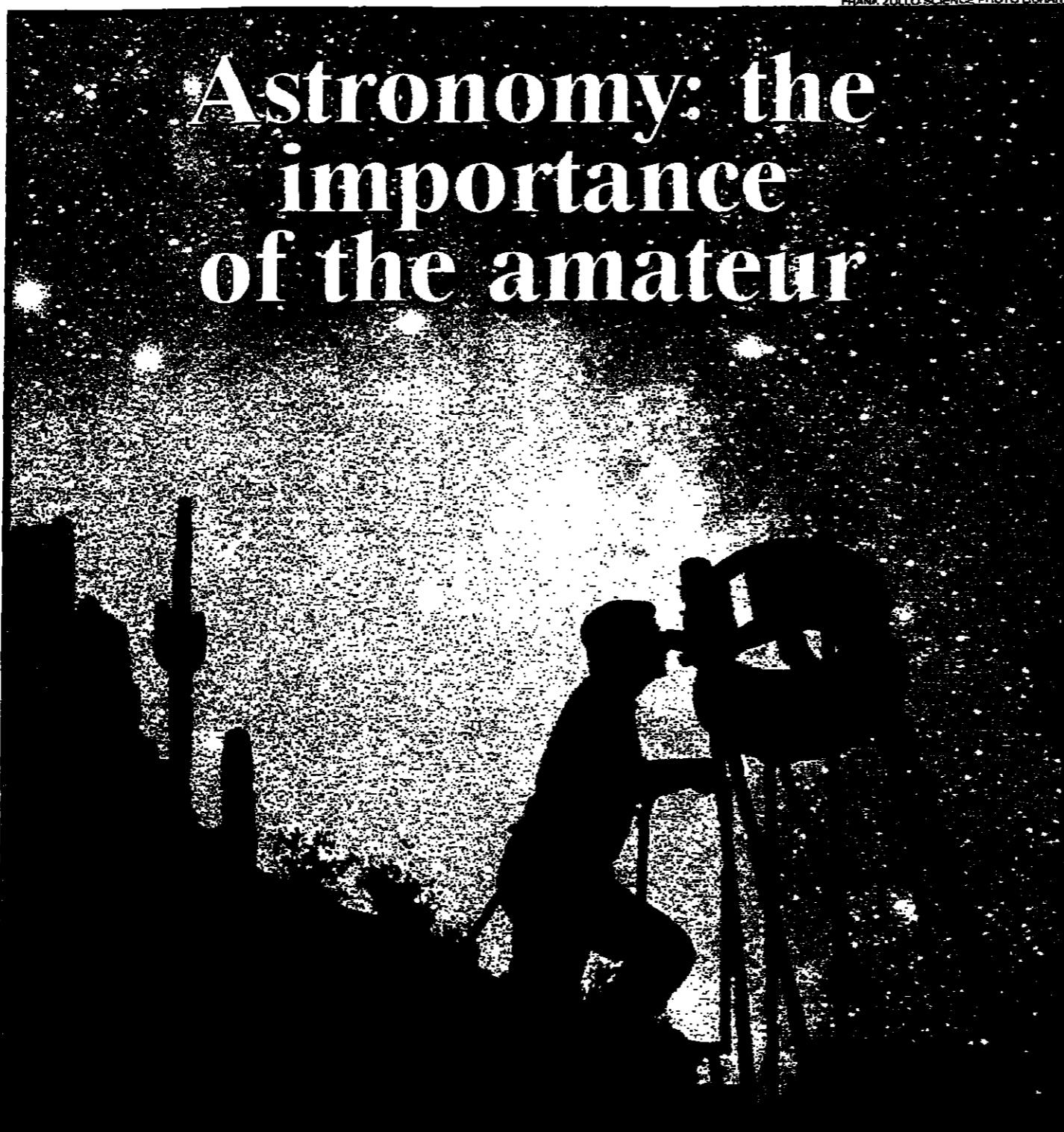
Apart from the fact that most amateurs are men, Mrs Fleet is typical of the majority of Britain's skywatchers. They spend perhaps a few hours a week in their back gardens, attend evening classes and presentations, and read astronomy books. A few might even venture on the odd astronomy weekend in the country, accompanied only by fellow enthusiasts, a flask of hot tea and a telescope.

About one in ten, however, is a serious amateur, spending every moment on a clear night with an eye glued to their telescope. They hunt for comets, asteroids, exploding stars, or stars whose brightness changes rapidly (called variables).

Planets (bodies orbiting stars) outside our own solar system are difficult to spot because their presence can be inferred only from delicate changes in stellar motion. However, as a *Horizon* documentary will show tonight (*The Planet Hunters*, BBC2, 9pm), amateur astronomers are still planning to give the professional planet-hunters a run for their money.

Guy Hurst is the king of the serious amateurs. By day he is Mr Ordinary, a 50-year-old regional bank manager, husband, father of three sons and owner of a large detached house in Hampshire's affluent stockbroker belt.

Outside office hours, he is editor of *The Astronomer*, a monthly international magazine dedicated to a worldwide community of



Milky Way kid: the figure of a lonely astronomer is silhouetted against the bright night sky on Superstition Mountain, Arizona

3,000 active amateur astronomers. By informal arrangement with the Central Bureau of Astronomical Telegrams (CBAT), in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he is also the first port of call for people around the world who think they have made a discovery. As a result, Mr Hurst spends much of his time fielding calls in the middle of the night from excited, incoherent strangers.

"After three false alarms in one night, it can get a bit much," he admits. Luckily his wife, Anne, is a

very patient woman. He says proudly: "She has taken the initial calls for many major discoveries, and has become very adept at asking the right questions."

It also means he has been involved with headline-hitting events. Two stand out. The first was the discovery in 1977 of an exploding star by a postman in Huddersfield. The postman sent the broken pair of binoculars with which he made his discovery to Mr Hurst as a souvenir.

The other was the discovery of a comet in 1983 by George Alcock who, in his eighties, is the elder statesman of amateur astronomy in Britain. "George saw this comet directly overhead, and it was missed by everybody except for a satellite and a Japanese amateur," Mr Hurst recalls. "It ended up being called Comet IRAS-Iraki-Alcock."

A promising phone call or e-mail message to the Hurst household triggers a sequence of events of

almost military precision. Mr Hurst immediately contacts a network of ten colleagues across Britain willing to be woken up at any time, who try to check the sighting with their own equipment before the object disappears over the horizon. Mr Hurst will do the same, using the observatory he has built in his back garden. He may also contact astronomers abroad who can track an object further along its path.

"If that is encouraging, I contact

the CBAT, which checks its records and either verifies the claim or keeps it on file," says Mr Hurst. The CBAT asks people to confirm their own findings by providing two photographs several hours apart.

Then comes the tricky business of naming the discoveries. CBAT, which is a part of the International Astronomical Union (IAU), the controlling world body for astronomy, oversees the naming of novae, supernovae and comets. Novae (stars which brighten rapidly) are named by constellation and year of observation, supernovae by year and half-month.

Comets are initially named by year, half-month and numeral. Once the orbit is worked out, the Small Bodies Names Committee — made up of nine international astronomers — decides on a popular name. They normally honour the discoverers — such as Comet Halley and Comet Shoemaker-Levy. Occasionally, however, several people independently claim a discovery. A committee decision means responsibility, and blame, is spread between nine people.

For asteroids, the discoverer can suggest a name which goes forward for approval by the Minor Planets Centre, also part of the IAU. The name must be inoffensive, dissimilar to existing names, contain fewer than 16 letters and not honour political or military figures. "It helps if it's witty," adds Gareth Williams, associate director of the CBAT.

The whole business of amateur astronomy seems very organised. But the pastime is in danger of being blotted out by the ever-brightening skies. Proliferating street and security lighting has already made stargazing in cities impossible and the problem has begun to spread to rural areas.

"Sometimes I go out to use my telescope and a neighbour's security light goes on," says Mr Hurst. "It's murder because I have to wait for my eyes to get used to the dark again. I can understand why people want lights, but the problem is the way they're used."

"Most light goes into the sky when it should be directed towards the ground," The British Astronomical Association set up the Campaign for Dark Skies several years ago to bring attention to this scourge.

For those blessed with dark skies, however, the next fortnight will provide an exciting glimpse of the wonders of skywatching. On or about March 27, the skies above Britain will play host to Comet Hyakutake, predicted to be the brightest comet for many years and definitely visible to the naked eye. And how do we know about it? All thanks to an amateur astronomer in Japan, who discovered it in January this year.

Blood clue to mental illness

AN AMERICAN psychologist has drawn from her own family's experience to develop a new theory about the origins of schizophrenia. Dr J. Megginson Hollister of the University of Pennsylvania has a sister who suffers from the disease, while she and her brother are free of it.

One difference between them, she realised, was in their blood groups. She and her brother were rhesus-negative, the same blood group as their mother, while her sister is rhesus-positive. It is well-known that rhesus-negative mothers can become sensitised to rhesus-positive babies, and the immune response that is provoked can cause anaemia, jaundice and brain damage.

Dr Hollister wondered if there might be a connection between rhesus-incompatibility and schizophrenia, and investigated it by studying Danish medical records for 1,867 men born between 1959 and 1961 in Copenhagen. A total of



535 of the men were rhesus-incompatible, while 1,322 were rhesus-compatible.

In the *Archives of General Psychiatry* she and co-workers report that medical records for the men up to and including 1994 show that schizophrenia is more than twice as common in the rhesus-incompatible group. Among these men the rate reached 2.1 per cent, while it was 0.8 per cent in the rhesus-compatible group.

Among second-born and later-born men, the difference was even greater — 2.6 per cent versus 0.8 per cent. This fits with the theory, because later pregnancies typically produce a stronger response.

The finding could help in the search for the genes that predispose towards schizophrenia. The blood groups are determined by the genes, so there is a strong likelihood that rhesus incompatibility clusters in some families. If these families also have a raised chance of schizophrenia, this could be because of their blood groups, and the greater danger this exposes them to in the womb, rather than to a gene for schizophrenia itself.

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The quark may lose its place as nature's tiniest building block

How small can you get?

AT THE turn of the century, physics was both shaken and stirred by an experiment in which Ernest Rutherford fired alpha particles at thin sheets of gold foil. Most of the particles went straight through, showing that the atoms in the foil were largely empty space. But some bounced off at surprising angles, suggesting that within the emptiness the atom had a solid heart, the nucleus.

A new experiment, recently reported from Fermilab, the US accelerator laboratory near Chicago, threatens to have similar repercussions. The results indicate that the quarks, which have inherited the atom's mantle as the fundamental particles of matter, may actually be made up of something even smaller. If so, one of the most resilient theories of science, the so-called standard model, may have to be jettisoned.

The standard model says that matter is made up of six quarks, six leptons (the electron, muon and tau, plus their neutrinos) and their anti-particles. Quarks form groups of two or three, bound together to make particles such as the proton and neutron. The model, which emerged about 20 years ago, has had a brilliant career, explaining results after result with stunning precision.

The new results have emerged on the horizon like a cloud no bigger than a man's hand. They come from experiments in which protons and antiprotons are collided at high energy, and "jets" of



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

particles emerge at large energies and angles. The standard model — or a component part of it, called quantum chromodynamics, or QCD — predicts these jets remarkably well. The jets are the nearest we ever get actually to seeing quarks and gluons (the particles that carry the strong nuclear force).

At low energies QCD predicts the jets well, but at higher energies, the Fermilab team reports in *Physical Review Letters*, there seem to be more of them than there ought to be. This implies that quarks are not point-like, but have a structure of their own, driving a hole through QCD

and the standard model.

Observes says that the results still have to be confirmed, and the team responsible is not claiming to have found any new physics. But if the result is confirmed, what would it have to give? Fudging QCD so that it fits the new observations would be very difficult, but it may be that the QCD calculations predicting the jets are wrong. That would be easier to bear.

Another possibility is that quarks have a "super-strong" force holding them together as well as the strong force. Yet another would be that quarks are no more fundamental than Rutherford found the atom to be. But at the moment, says Dr Frank Wilczek of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, "no ready explanation appears compelling". In plainer language, puzzlement is the order of the day.

When plant genes go wild



THE genes introduced into plants to make them better performers could escape more easily than previously supposed. Two recent papers, one in the *Journal of Applied Ecology* and the other in *Nature*, report experiments in which genes introduced into oilseed rape have appeared in nearby weeds by the process of hybridisation.

A French team found such

hybrids produced between rape and hoary mustard, while a Danish team found that a weedy relative of rape, *Brassica campestris*, was forming hybrids. This could be disastrous.

Plant genetic engineers have tried to produce crops that are pesticide-resistant, meaning they can be sprayed with weedkillers which kill the weeds, but not the plants. The plan will fail, however, if the genes make weeds resistant too, as both studies suggest.

The secret of turning turtles



HOW do turtles navigate? In the magazine *Nature*, Drs Kenneth and Catherine Lohmann, of the University of North Carolina, provide an explanation.

They have previously shown that loggerhead turtles can distinguish the inclination of the Earth's magnetic field — that is, the angle of the magnetic lines of force. But that alone is not enough.

The new work shows that turtles can also detect the intensity of the field, which varies across the surface of the Earth. Hatchlings were tested in a pool surrounded by a coil which could produce different field intensities. When it was stronger than that at their natal beach, they swam eastwards; when weaker, they swam westwards. Combining angle and intensity would give turtles a magnetic "map" from which they could work out both position and direction.

Spine-chilling tale of a shrew



THE hero shrew, a native of Uganda, Zaire and Rwanda, gives the word backbone a totally new meaning.

Not only can the 10in-long shrew bend itself into a U-shape in which its snout touches its hind feet, but it can also, allegedly, bear the weight of a full-grown man standing on it.

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Wanted – more Tory women in the House

There are far too few Conservative women MPs, says Alice Thomson — and after the next election the situation could look even worse

LAST week politicians were falling over themselves to be seen celebrating International Women's Week, with cocktails, debates and glossy brochures.

They all claimed they understood the problems that women face and tried to woo the hearts of both the blue-rinse matrons of the shires and young careerists with promises of safer streets and better childcare. And they swore that they were dedicated washers-up and nappy-changers in their own homes.

Curiously, most of them failed to mention that equality of the sexes is still woefully inadequate along the green leather benches of the House on the Thames.

Britain has one of the worst records in the world when it comes to female representation in Parliament, lagging behind Indonesia and Cameroon. In the past 100 years there have been more than 4,500 men MPs, and only 169 women.

The days when Barbara Castle fought for more than one ladies' lavatory in the Houses of Parliament might be over. But there are still no hairdressers in the palace, only a barber's shop, and no nursery, only a rifle range. There are also more MPs named John than there are women.

When Nancy Astor became the first woman to take her seat 75 years ago and pledged to speak "for women and children up and down the country", Winston Churchill retorted: "A woman in the Commons is like a woman in my bathroom."

Since then, the Churchillian brigade seems to have won and the Tory party, which gave women the vote, is easily the worst offender.

Whatever one thinks of Labour's controversial all-women shortlists, they would increase the party's ranks from the current 38 female MPs enormously.

The Tories may be chortling because the scheme has been deemed illegal, but they could themselves face a public relations disaster over unequal opportunities after the next general election.

If Labour wins, the Tories could end up with 20 female MPs on their benches, while Labour could have up to 100, leaving the Tories looking distinctly antiquated and boorish.

John Major is said to be "deeply concerned" about the prospect. Dame Angela Rumbold, the first female vice-chairman of the party, in charge of the candidates' list, has done everything she can to encourage women to fight for seats.

Although the Tory party is stuffed with articulate, loyal and often ambitious women, they never seem to get past the supporting roles. Female constituency chairmen expend their energies rallying their dispirited troops with fundraising bridge parties.

Bright female special advisers keep their ministers together, and other formidable Tory women head think-tanks. And Conservative MPs' wives are often harder-working than their husbands, writing thousands of constituency letters and standing by their man through any sleaze scandal.

But as the former Tory MP Emma Nicholson — who re-



Against all the odds — Angela Knight (centre) made it to junior Treasury Minister, but she is an exception to the Tory rule



Virginia Bottomley — given the job of English rose

'We are the handmaidens of the Tory party; we are expected to do good and keep out of sight'

cently defected to the Liberal Democrats — said: "We are the handmaidens of the party; we are expected to do good and keep out of sight."

The main problem for Conservative women has always been getting past local selection committees. So far, only five women have been chosen to fight Tory-held seats at the next general election. If a female candidate is lucky enough to be granted an

interview, she faces a minefield planted by the usually elderly, traditionalist constituents.

If she has children she is made to feel she will "orphan" them by going to Westminster. If she doesn't, she is accused of not being able to represent the family. Yet the traditional white male is rarely asked about babysitting rotas.

If she waits until the children are grown up, she is considered too old. Teresa Gorman, the maverick Tory MP for Billericay, eventually got round the problem by slightly altering her age. Virginia Bottomley conveniently forgot to tell her local association she still had a young child.

Kay Coleman, a fiftyish Mancunian candidate, says: "I often have to remind selection committees that I have yet to find a woman who would put an orange in her mouth and a plastic bag on her head while wearing suspenders. Nor do we have time for affairs. The Tories should be crying out for more women."

Three women stand out: Angela Knight, Angela Browning and Cheryl Gillan. They have managed to infiltrate traditionally male departments such as the Treasury as junior ministers, and have proved they can balance their red boxes with family life. But they have only been in Parliament since 1992, and even Michael Portillo didn't make it to the Cabinet quite that fast.

He then recounts how the men were taken inside the house, one by one. He says: "They were taking certain people and saying: 'Don't worry, your turn will come. There's no need to be afraid. You're just going in for

make it on to the first step of the ministerial rung, women will have to prove that they do not screech at the dispatch box, can cope with the bar-raiding and bantering — and still do the washing-up when they get home.

Then there is their appearance, which is reckoned crucial to the party's morale. Men get away with wearing an egg-stained tie all week, women have to look feminine, demure and fragrant. The more responsibilities they get, the more important it is to buy those neat, toning suits, get their hair curled and make sure their bra-strap isn't showing.

Joanna Bale on the shocking evidence of a Muslim boy

A bedraggled group of Muslim men and youths, some of them wounded, sat in a remote field on the outskirts of Srebrenica, surrounded by Serb soldiers. One by one, they were led away to a derelict house for interrogation which they knew would end in death.

It was July 13, 1995, and thousands of men captured as the United Nations "safe haven" of Srebrenica fell to the Serbs were being systematically killed and buried in mass graves.

A witness to the events at the derelict house was 16-year-old Enver Husic, who had been forced to surrender with his badly wounded father but managed to escape. As he was refilling his water can at a spring on the side of the road, a bus full of refugees stopped next to him. Enver quietly got on, huddled behind some bags, and was taken to the safety of a refugee camp.

Enver, now 17, tells his harrowing story in tonight's *Panorama* investigation on BBC1 of the war crimes committed by the Serbs in Srebrenica. He describes how he and his father dodged Serb ambushes and witnessed dreadful slaughter before they were surrounded and forced to surrender.

They were taken to the field next to the derelict house, which had been shelled but was still standing. He describes how a Serbian woman soldier began picking out men for "interrogation".

He says: "A woman in a camouflage uniform came out. She had a gun... They kept molesting people, asking them for money. They beat people. They hit them on the head with their rifles. I couldn't watch this any more."

Enver was ordered by a Serb soldier to fetch water for the men as it was a hot day and most were begging for something to drink.

He recalls: "One of them said: 'Let them have the water before we kill them... I kept getting water and I had to obey their orders. I did whatever they wanted me to do.'"

He then recounts how the men were taken inside the house, one by one. He says: "They were taking certain people and saying: 'Don't worry, your turn will come. There's no need to be afraid. You're just going in for

'I witnessed a Serbian death squad'

interrogation," but nobody was coming out again."

Asked if he could hear anything from the house, he replies: "I could only hear banging noises, nothing else. It sounded as if something was being hit."

The men in the field were exhausted. "They didn't have any food. They were very pale and terrified. They knew what was awaiting them. I did too. They knew they were going to be killed. They were praying to be simply killed. I heard people

on a Serb propaganda video and correctly guessing that he might have escaped death.

With the help of Vera, her Serbo-Croatian translator, 42-year-old Ms Corbin toured refugee camps with a picture of Enver taken from the video, and finally found him. She says: "I spent a day with him going over what had happened to him, but when it came to talking about how he felt about leaving his father behind, he just could not bring himself to do so."

Ms Corbin and her television crew found the house that Enver had described, helped by a map he had drawn. It was exactly as he had said, and they discovered belongings such as shoes, glasses and personal papers which supported reports that people had recently been systematically executed there. The house was near the site of a mass grave, one of several which will be dug up in the spring.

The Serb film which features Enver is now in the hands of war crimes investigators. It shows Dutch UN troops looking on while Nazi-style selections take place, separating the men and the women refugees.

The Dutch have denied that they saw any serious war crimes being committed, but admitted that they ran over refugees with their armoured personnel carriers in their panic to pull out of Srebrenica as the Serbs advanced.

The horrors of Srebrenica led to Nato finally attacking the Bosnian Serb war machine and, ultimately, the peace accord signed last December in Paris.

Ms Corbin says: "Our film will provide useful evidence to investigators as it is the first detailed analysis of one particular war crime. Bringing those responsible to trial will help to break the cycle of violence which was at the root of the civil war in former Yugoslavia."

Enver is one of six people who give important eyewitness accounts of mass executions in tonight's programme. Jane Corbin, the award-winning *Panorama* reporter, spent several weeks tracking him down after spotting his young face

whispering that they were hoping to be killed without suffering."

Enver eventually arrived safely in a town called Kladanj, where he was taken to a refugee camp and reunited with his mother, sister and brother. His father and uncle are missing, presumed dead, two of an estimated 7,000 men executed by the Serbs and buried in mass graves during the fall of Srebrenica.

Enver firmly denies Serb claims that the 7,000 men were killed in battle, saying that most of them were civilians.

Enver is one of six people who give important eyewitness accounts of mass executions in tonight's programme. Jane Corbin, the award-winning *Panorama* reporter, spent several weeks tracking him down after spotting his young face

whispering that they were hoping to be killed without suffering."

Enver eventually arrived safely in a town called Kladanj, where he was taken to a refugee camp and reunited with his mother, sister and brother. His father and uncle are missing, presumed dead, two of an estimated 7,000 men executed by the Serbs and buried in mass graves during the fall of Srebrenica.

Enver firmly denies Serb claims that the 7,000 men were killed in battle, saying that most of them were civilians.

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Matthew Parris



■ Despite economic ruin, Cuba has an unspoilt charm as its people wait for something to happen

On a vast rock face at the western end of the island of Cuba, a huge outdoor mural has been executed in lurid paint: *The Ascent of Man*. It starts with an amoeba and ends with Socialist Man triumphant.

Triumph wears thin, however. Returning from Cuba some time ago with a jumble of impressions which refused to cohere, I wrote little about it. But the shooting down by Castro's forces of two planes flown from Miami stirred my memories.

People have been urging that America's economic blockade be intensified, and joined by Europe, to "punish" Havana. I am sure this is the wrong response. The clearest impression I brought home was that persecution of Castro's regime is the final potent force still shoring up his authority.

There was an air of desperation there. Machines were broken, fuel was short.

The economy is wrecked. Beside Cuba's one motorway, thousands camp, hoping to hitch-hike, as rusting signs for un-built slip-roads swing in a hot wind.

Other images stay with me: an ox-cart with wooden wheels lumbering past a brutal concrete apartment block; the Cuban National Ballet performing a Sunday matinee in an enormous *fin-de-siècle* ballet house; no refreshments, tickets almost free.

Havana teenagers snogging in the back row while a jet black dancer in pink tights and a white Regency wig writhes himself into the arms of a brown-skinned ballerina in spangled tutu, to recorded music of a Russian ballet.

Havana is a splendid city. To international socialism we owe the conservation almost intact of great chunks of the last two centuries which capitalist progress has elsewhere swept away.

Rotting but untouched, old Havana has complete architectural integrity and could be restored as the world's greatest surviving Spanish colonial city.

Like its 1950s American cars, Havana is a classic. To be on the dark streets of old Havana at night — coffee-skinned Latin youths in sideburns hissing from the shadows or leaning against battered old Chevies — felt like walking onto the set of *West Side Story*.

Racial discrimination, officially abolished by Marxism, is subtle and persistent beneath the surface. There are codes. The word *tropicalista* is a term that the more Hispanic Cubans, mostly in charge, use to refer to blacks. Of course everyone is equal: Spaniards and their descendants in Latin America have never made the Afrikaner mistake of committing anything to law.

Nothing works. In the delightful town of Santa Clara, around midnight, I found a horse-drawn society

(even the taxis) and half of the town out at midnight, promenading, chatting and dancing in the square. There was no food for sale and the only drink was tea. Protein is rationed. The only meat available to locals was reconstituted Spam, also rationed.

Fidel's economics are discredited among his people, especially younger Cubans. I met few who had a good word to say for the regime, and many in the street fearlessly refer to their President as a tyrant. But what remains unshaken is a sort of national idealism.

There is a sense of Cuban brotherhood, and Castro exploits this. There is a feeling of unity and suffering. The suffering is blamed, jointly, on the island's abandonment by Russia, and on the American blockade. Even power cuts are attributed to the Americans.

If the Cubans hate their country's tyrannical bureaucracy, they fear the United States more, and put much of the blame on the blockade. Many do believe that America wants to seize the island: this part of Castro's doctrine has taken deep root. So when he rails against the imperial ambitions of Cuba's super-power neighbour, he strikes a chord. Fidel's own responsibility for the economic mess is overlooked. The American threat is more urgent. The blockade, its visible symbol, provides the Socialists with their last excuse.

I believe American hostility alone may now be keeping Castro in power, and that he knows it. To see his latest atrocity as a reason for tightening that clenched fist is to draw precisely the wrong conclusion. When the fist unclenches, I doubt Castro's rule will survive two years. I even wonder whether the attack was arranged by Havana in order to boost the progress in Washington of the Helms-Burton Bill, which raises the clenched fist higher.

On my last evening in Cuba, I walked along the Malecon in Havana: a sea-front promenade where tens of thousands of Cubans congregate to chat, stare, dodge the six lanes of Chinese "Flying Pigeon" bicycles, or just look out to sea. Street lighting was poor and there was a total absence of amplified music or traffic noise: only subdued conversation and the whir of bicycles.

It was quiet and dark, and yet one was in the presence of thousands. Most were just standing or sitting. They were like the audience for a stage extravaganza, after the lights had gone down but before the orchestra has struck up. Everyone was waiting. What? Thousands of people, standing on corners, watching from balconies: waiting — but for what?

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Two of the 21st century's superpowers continue to feel affection for the real British legacy

In praise of India

Anyone who wants to understand the modern world must make a personal passage to India, which has the deepest and most resilient culture of the four likely economic superpowers of the next century, more stable and politically advanced than China, not yet denatured by the modernism of the United States and Europe. Indian civilisation is a great lake into which the rivers of different cultures have flowed for more than two and a half millennia, each depositing a new layer.

In Delhi last week I spoke to an elderly Indian scholar about India's experience of British rule. He talked of the "unintended consequences" of the British Empire. He said that these included not only democracy, but the essential conditions for democracy, a non-political army, the law and the courts, a professional Civil Service and a free press. The Indian Army is virtually the only army east of Suez which has not intervened in politics in the past 50 years. He added that the British had also left behind the idea of India as a single country, which had not previously existed, and that the English language had allowed people of 80 different tongues to talk to each other.

I was struck by the obvious comparison with the United States. In each country there was a struggle for independence: in India the peaceful struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi, in the United States the war fought by George Washington. There is no doubt who was the greater man. In each country, democracy depends on institutions which are either British in origin or which developed from the British. The Empire was a passing phase, which in India lasted for less than 200 years, much shorter than the Mogul Empire, but it is a historical fact that the two greatest democracies of the modern world emerged from the experience of British rule, as well as from

gaining their independence from us. As with the United States, Britain still has "a special relationship" with India. We sometimes irritate each other, but in both cases Britain operates largely inside the immune system of the other national culture. Any visiting British journalist has experienced an ease of acceptance in New York or Delhi, compared with a sense of being a stranger in Paris or Bonn. The only European countries which for the British approach the translucency of the Indian or American special relationship are The Netherlands and, sometimes, Italy.

I went to India as a guest of the K.K. Birla Foundation and the *Hindustan Times* to deliver a lecture on the world outlook for the next century. India has made a relatively slow start in the economic expansion which is spreading throughout Asia. India's economic liberalisation began in 1990, ten years later than China's, but whatever government is elected in May this liberalisation will not be reversed, because it is working. Economic growth is above 6 per cent; profit growth is 25-30 per cent; the rupee is strong; inflation is low, though interest rates are high; living standards are rising.

In India one can see the inevitability of Asian economic expansion, despite the serious problem of population growth. For instance, Indian banks are now computerising. They are naturally installing the most modern computer software, such as Citibank might use, and so go from the ledger to the Microsoft stage in one jump. The high growth of Asian economies is largely based on this transfer of technology, which provides outstanding investment oppor-

tunities. The formula can be described as ESP: Education + Software = Productivity. Given the same software, an Indian keyboard operator is as productive as an American or Japanese, the keyboards are coming in. India has a middle class, capable of using the keyboards, as large as the whole population of the United States.

When one visits India one expects to see mass poverty. Last week I was much more struck by the evidence of mass prosperity. One Indian estimat-

ed me that of a population of close to one billion — 80 per cent of China's — 250 million belong to the rich, the upper-middle or the lower-middle class. 500 million are farm or factory workers, and 250 million are the landless non-industrial poor and very poor. In Delhi and driving through the North Indian plain, a large, fertile and well farmed area which rather reminded me of French farming, I was aware of the 250 million poor, most of whom are in other regions, but even more aware of the 750 million who are above, and often well above, the poverty line.

The best single indicator of a developing country's real prosperity is the condition of its children. There are still child beggars in India, skinny children selling newspapers at traffic lights, pointing their fingers

pathetically to their lips. But even outside the Taj Mahal there were not all that many beggars. Driving back from Agra by side roads through the farm villages, I saw neatly dressed, well nourished, happy-looking children playing together or, occasionally, leading a herd through a field. The cash incomes may be low, but the condition of these children is good.

It is hard to calculate the real wealth of people whose pay is very small in Western terms, but whose living costs are also low. I bought a well-made leather wallet which was pushed through the car window at Agra for 100 rupees, just under £2. Roadside food vendors sell a snack of an egg and a cup of tea for 1½ rupees, or 3p, although foreign tourists are not advised to eat these snacks. Most Indians do not seem to be living badly, and certainly they are living much better than they were. That matters much more to them than the problems of political corruption of the ministers who have taken bribes, which are the big story in the political press. It is worth noting that while many Indian politicians have taken bribes, few senior civil servants and hardly any judges have done so.

In my lecture I made some calculations of the likely gross domestic product of the main economic powers in 30 years' time. If Asian growth continues at around 7 per cent, and the mature economies keep growing at around 2.5 per cent until 2025, then India, the United States and the European Union will each have about the same GDP. That would be twice the present American or European level, in real terms, and nearly seven times the present Indian level. China, the hardest to predict, could

have an economy half as large again. Japan, Russia and Brazil will be important but secondary economic powers. Islam will be an additional force.

India has already solved the constitutional problem which China has repeatedly failed to solve in the 20th century. One hopes that the growth of China's middle class will allow a transition to constitutional democracy, although if it does not, China's economic expansion is likely in the next century to be aborted by political turmoil.

Britain will have a unique role in the world politics of the 21st century. We are a member of the European Union, and are likely to remain so. But of all the European nations, we have much the closest relations with the two other democratic superpowers, the United States and India. If the world of the next century is to be peaceful and progressive, Britain will be an essential factor in the network of power, the only nation to have a special relationship with three of the four economic superpowers.

India has a transforming economic prospect, but Indians feel prouder of their religious and cultural tradition than of their economic future. Hindu pluralism, and the tradition of the "religion of God" of the Emperor Akbar, give Indian spirituality an interesting congruence with modern thought: the Indians have a paradoxical sense of the universality and variability of truth. The British Viceroy whom the Indians most admire is Lord Curzon, because he loved India, was interested in its culture, and preserved its monuments. When I was in Peking I viewed Mao's waxen body in Tiananmen Square, the preserved corpse of a bad man in a bad place. In Delhi I prayed before the eternal flame in Mahatma Gandhi's garden shrine. China has still to find the road away from the Marxist brutality of Chairman Mao; India still reveres Gandhi's way of peace.

A Labour lesson on Europe

Peter Riddell says the Tories should beware of tearing the party in two



RIDDELL ON MONDAY

The Conservatives are again in danger of failing the basic test of any political party that wants to survive in office: ensuring that differences of opinion do not become avoidable public splits. But Europe is like a fatally alluring siren to many Conservative MPs. They keep being drawn back, even though it has been the cause of such grief to them in recent years.

The obvious tactic, and the Government's preferred course, would be to steer clear of such temptations. Decisions which do not have to be addressed now — or at any rate this side of an election — could be deferred. But parties in the grip of an obsession are seldom that sensible. They lose their sense of proportion. In the early 1990s, the Balfour Government was torn apart by a Cabinet dispute over tariff reform which exaggerated its real significance and possible benefits. Similarly, now, a vocal minority of MPs believes that the future of Britain is at stake. They are in no mood for self-restraint. They want an argument, no matter how self-destructive.

Britain's relations with the European Union certainly raise big constitutional questions. But these are not on the agenda of the inter-governmental conference, which is due to be formally launched at the Turin summit at the end of this month. And a single currency, which is undeniably of enormous importance, does not have to be decided until some indefinite future date. The British Government should have been able to treat the conference largely as a tidying-up operation before these later crucial matters of monetary union and enlargement have to be tackled. But in the current fractious state of the Tory party, anything said

about Europe is treated with great suspicion.

Last week, for example, Malcolm Rifkind urged a continuation of the inter-governmental approach to European security and defence policy. He made some practical suggestions for improving co-operation, including having a spokesman on foreign policy for the Council of Ministers but subordinate to them. This idea is opposed by the centralists and the Brussels Commission, who would like foreign policy brought under their control. But it was immediately misrepresented and denounced by the sceptics as implying a single European foreign secretary.

Tomorrow's White Paper on the inter-governmental conference has become a symbol of these tensions and of the Government's attempt to defuse them. The decisive argument in favour of publication came from the business managers. They

gave a warning that unless the Government promised a White Paper, Labour might put forward a motion calling for one, which might carry the Commons with the support of Conservative sceptics.

The White Paper will be an arduous exercise in conciliation without commitment. Existing policy will be dressed up in grand statements about the importance of Britain's place in Europe (to please the pro-Europeans) coupled with warnings against further centralisation (for the sceptics). Mr Rifkind has adopted a double negative strategy: no to granting any new powers to European institutions, and no to big demands for repatriation of powers.

So while Britain will resist any extension of qualified majority voting on the Council of Ministers, it will not be seeking to unravel the Maastricht

treaty. As I foreshadowed in this column four weeks ago, the Government will, for instance, propose limited changes to the European Court of Justice, to introduce an appeals mechanism and to limit retrospective judgments, and will seek to expand the role of national parliaments in early discussion of European legislation.

For a party not obsessed with Europe, these sensible ideas could be the basis of a consensus. The White Paper is, in fact, towards the sceptical end of the realist spectrum — realist in the sense that it could conceivably lead to a deal at the conference, although probably only after a shift in Britain's position on qualified majority voting. But many in the Conservative Party will not be satisfied. They are not arguing in these terms. They would rather see a confrontation — whether over an issue like the European Court and fisheries or over the conference

agenda — which forces a wholesale renegotiation of Britain's relations with the EU, leading to a looser free-trade agreement.

Douglas Hogg has already been widely attacked by the sceptics for saying that it was an "illusion" to claim that Britain could withdraw from the common fisheries policy. But Germany and France are not going to allow Britain to enjoy the benefits of the single market and free trade if we are unwilling to bear the full responsibilities of membership.

The sceptics are making demands which cannot conceivably be met by the conference. This is clear even when they are presented in the sophisticated terms of John Redwood, and even more so in the "impossibilist" terms of the hardcore group which previously resigned the whip. And yet anything less will be attacked as a sell-out. Hence, all the Government can do is play for time — but even this hope has been complicated by the single currency.

John Major wants to keep open all options. However, many Conservative MPs with small majorities have got in a tizzy because of a letter sent out by Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party seeking their views. To head off the Goldsmith threat in marginal seats, Conservative Central Office is now leading the campaign for a pledge that a referendum would be held if a Tory Cabinet ever recommended entry into a single currency. A remote possibility has been turned into a pressing crisis.

Of course, as frustrated Tories point out, Labour has similar divisions over Europe, but many of its sceptics are keeping quiet. Unlike the party of the 1970 and early 1980s, 1990s Labour has learnt to handle these differences without splitting itself apart.

The Tories may have to face the traumas of opposition before they learn how to handle Europe without severely damaging themselves. The real difference between the parties over Europe is less on policy — where Tories and Labour broadly agree on defence and border control — than in their internal party conditions. Tony Blair has, for the moment, freedom of manoeuvre on Europe, while John Major is trapped in a straitjacket.

High society

A NEW and fashionable dining society has established itself in London. The Roy Jenkins Appreciation Society has been formed in celebration of one of the great figures of modern political and literary life.



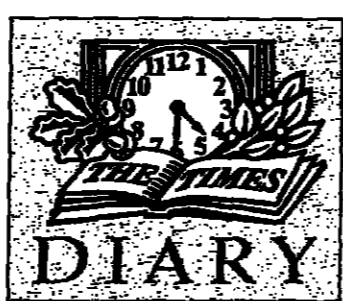
Appreciated: our Roy

Membership, by invitation only, is restricted to a dozen of the capital's *beau monde*, says the society's "provost", Hywel Williams, campaign manager to John Redwood and director of the Redwood think-tank, Conservative 2000.

"Readings from the great man's works, such as his recent biography of Gladstone, will take place at society dinners and accompany the sampling of first-growth claret. References to Whigs, Whiggery and Whiggishness will be lavish," he says.

I understand that members will be asked to "rouge up" their faces in the Whiggish manner and have to endure occasional *voyage de pèlerinage* to Michelin-starred restaurants in Brussels, so as to appreciate Lord Jenkins of Hillhead's former role as President of the European Commission.

"An ability to pronounce one's Rs correctly will not automatically disqualify a candidate for selection," says Williams — "but along with pomposity, a certain slurring is desirable."



● Judge Stephen Tumim, the former Chief Inspector of Prisons, has taken on a new post as High Steward of the Oxfordshire town of Wallingford. Duties are light, remuneration is £1 and Tumim is already settling in. "Part of the inauguration involved having a sash of Benedictine, which is rather good," he says.

Doubled up

IN WASHINGTON, trickbats are flying over the Duke of Edinburgh's decision to attend a congressional fundraising dinner on the same night as the Irish American Fund holds its money-raiser "for peace".

Irish salmon, Guinness and Irish whiskey will be flown in for the other knees-up on March 14, as will the Irish Prime Minister John Bruton, and the Northern Ireland MPs John Hume and David Trimble. But although the Duke will be in town, he is not planning to put his nose round the door.

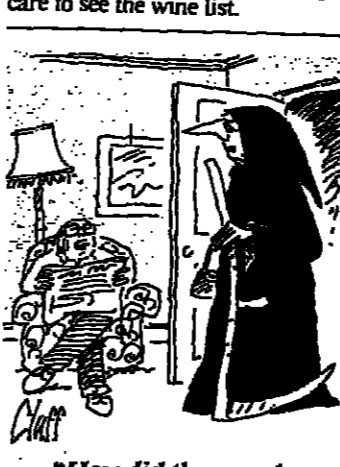
The gala chairman, Paul Quinn, thinks it "odd" that Prince Philip will be in Washington at a different dinner on the same night. "But the Irish and British have always been very competitive — particularly in Washington," he says.

Still waiting

ONE OF the most powerful men in New York has notched up half a century in the job. Regulars gathered last week to toast Walter Weiss, head waiter at the restaurant Club 21.

Mr Manhattan's answer to the Savoy Grill, 21 is a place for *sotto voce* star-spotting, discreet deal-making and gusset-busting rice puddings. Along the banquet by the entrance you might find anyone from the President, to ageing Broadway dames who appreciate the low lighting.

Over the years, Walter, who is now 72, has jawed with Nixon about Californian wines and regarded Errol Flynn, Bogart and Bacall as friends. He maintained his dignity when he dropped Winston Churchill's pheasant, and kept a straight face when Cary Grant ordered a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. "Very good, sir," said Walter quietly, before inquiring, with a shudder, if Mr Grant might care to see the wine list.



"How did the speech go, dear?"

● A survey asked 12 to 19-year-olds at what age they should be expected to make their own beds and wash up. There was, said Barnardo's, which has just published *Young People's Social Attitudes*, "a tendency for children to give an age one year older than their own."

Fishy

IN TRUE film-star style, Michael Douglas sauntered into the Caviar House in Heathrow's Terminal 4 the other day and airily asked for ten 500g tins of the best Beluga caviare, costing £3,300. He was promised it would be delivered, packed in ice, to his flight, which was leaving shortly. Unfortunately the shop had only two tins left. Frantic scuttling around the airport finally produced the rest, which was almost thrown onto the BA flight to South Africa as Douglas was settling into his first-class seat. Some appetite.

Fated

THERE was much talk at last week's launch of *Magic and Fate* of Rachel Billington's precience. The novel includes a scene in which a



Campbell's tumble

model falls flat on her face on the catwalk, just like Naomi Campbell, the supermodel who toppled off her Vivienne Westwood platform shoes during a fashion show. "It was prophetic," I wrote the passage first, and a few months later Naomi fell over," recalls the author. "I do feel rather guilty — perhaps it's something to do with the tide."

P-H-S



AFTER THE COLD WAR

Thatcher returns to Fulton and to Churchill's themes

Baroness Thatcher can have travelled to Fulton, Missouri, with few illusions that she would find an eager American response to the commemorative speech she gave on Saturday. Like Winston Churchill 50 years before her, she was fighting against the tide. She was attempting to inject fresh urgency and vigour into the Atlantic Alliance at a time when most Americans believe that their shores are again immune from international danger and a call to fresh allied effort is the last message they want to hear.

For Lady Thatcher, there are parallels between the "alarming complacency" of today's post-Cold War mood in America and the "fatal hiatus" at the end of the Second World War, when Churchill irritated both Washington and London by drawing attention to the Iron Curtain descending in Europe as the unintended consequence of Germany's defeat. Her stark message is that the dangers we face today differ only in kind, not intensity, from those of 1946.

In the former Soviet empire, she says, the "Hobbesian conditions" of post-Communist life are breeding primitive political ideologies, and instabilities to which the West has given far too little thought. These conditions in turn aggravate the greatest threat to Western peace: the acquisition by rogue regimes of the technology to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction. Exceptional clarity is called for in the West to counter and contain a number of possible adversaries, all different, and make sure that its intentions are understood.

This was an alarmist speech — intentionally so — and it appeared at times, as with her call for a return to building anti-ballistic missile defences, to look back in nostalgia to the Reagan years. But on European security, and on what will have to be done to reinvigorate the Atlantic Alliance, she showed her old energy and clear eye for the essential.

She is right to turn on the European Union for neglecting "an almost explicit duty laid down by history": the speedy incorporation of the new democracies of Central Europe. She asks why, instead, "every obstacle" has been put in their way and absurd quotas imposed against their exports. She is right to point to the resulting

political costs in these fragile democracies as post-Communists profit from the perceived rebuff by Western Europe. And it is not necessary to share her unmitigated hostility to a European "defence identity" to recognise the force of her warnings that, without adding to Nato's military effectiveness, the "Europeanisation" of the alliance could easily be so mishandled as to diminish American involvement.

President Clinton's own election-year definition of a post-Cold War foreign policy is to pitch the US as "the world's very best peacemaker". The benign vagueness of this slogan avoids the difficulty of defining the tasks of the superpower in the absence of an easily identified threat. Lady Thatcher's response is to look, as some Republicans have done, for new forms of co-operation to "thicken" trans-Atlantic ties.

First, the Europeans would have to recognise that even if their cuts in defence spending were halted or reversed, it would be years before they could hope to replace the military assets which America makes available to the alliance. Secondly, to prevent trade disputes from poisoning transatlantic relations, she heavily supports the proposals floated by Malcolm Rifkind among others for a free trade area linking the existing North American free trade area with the European Union. Finally, she envisages a stronger political identity for Nato through annual Nato summits which, she hopes, would shape "an Atlantic public opinion and political consciousness".

There is a kind of innocence in Lady Thatcher's assumption that American leadership is always a thing of substance. The innocence may be cultivated: her appeal for American leadership may be informed by sharp anxiety about a generalised failure of American will. Mikhail Gorbachev once said that Moscow was about to do something dreadful to the West: it would deprive it of its enemy, and thus of its unifying principle. Lady Thatcher's conscious emulation of Churchill should be seen as something more serious than a call to her own divided political party. It is an effort to face up to the Gorbachev prophecy and to put in place some of the building-blocks of a new Western identity.

PARIAH NATION

Iranians must be made to feel the cost of supporting terrorism

Clerical extremists suffered a significant setback in elections to Iran's parliament on Friday. Any weakening of the zealots who have kept Iran a pariah state for over 15 years is welcome but the rebuff to Islamic radicalism should not be exaggerated. Iran is still one of the world's most intensely ideological states, and all 3,200 candidates allowed to contest the 270 seats had first to be vetted by mullahs determined to maintain the fervour of the Islamic Revolution.

The election coincided with international denunciation of Iranian support for terrorism in the wake of the suicide bombings in Israel. The Clinton Administration has accused Tehran of being the moral instigator and clandestine military supporter of Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad — terrorist groups that are violently opposed to the Middle East peace process. Britain last week summoned the Iranian chargé d'affaires to denounce Iran's open support for the recent atrocities in Israel. And Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, urged the European Union to stop "flirting" with Iran, insisting that it is a centre of terrorism and subversion.

World leaders will be as uncompromising in their condemnation when they meet for a brief emergency summit in Sinai on Wednesday to recommit themselves to the fight against terrorism. The Americans will demand support for their campaign to isolate Iran and topple the Government; the Europeans, defensively, will insist that their "critical dialogue" at present is mostly criticism.

World condemnation in the past has

mattered little to Iran; the mullahs have used their defiance of the "Great Satan" to impose their benighted politicisation of Islam on a country in desperate need of economic advance and competent government. This time, however, the relatively liberal President Rafsanjani may be able to turn the accusations to his advantage.

His hopes for economic liberalisation, an easing of the cultural war against the West and a more pragmatic foreign policy have been repeatedly thwarted by clerical hardliners. After the last election there were signs that Iran was ready for a thaw in relations with the West, only to be followed by a new outburst of xenophobia, support for subversion abroad and the eclipse of the pragmatic technocrats by clergy determined to prevent change. But now the country may be wearying of ideology.

As the vote shows, an increasing number of people want to focus on pressing daily problems: the price of food, fuel and housing, the influx from the countryside, the population boom that has lowered living standards and threatens widespread unemployment. The clergy are increasingly seen as ill-educated, incompetent and corrupt. Many Iranians are anxious to break out of their country's isolation, do business with the West and escape the harassment and stifling controls of Islamic vigilantes. President Rafsanjani cannot promise that economic reform will bring foreign investment or better relations with the West — but he can demonstrate that unless Iran jettisons its extremist baggage, it will remain stuck down its revolutionary cul-de-sac.

THE CAPTAIN'S ART

A leader must know how to win

This is not a good time for captains. One, Will Carling has decided to resign from his job next Saturday after England plays Ireland at Twickenham. Another, Michael Atherton, is looking for a hole in the ground to which to hide himself after a pasting from Sri Lanka in the cricket World Cup. A third, John Major, continues to suffer the disdain of the public. All three are victims of the curse of captaincy.

Writing in his recent book, *The Art of Captaincy*, Mike Brearley pointed out that "a captain is held responsible when things go wrong; and any rottenness in him rapidly spreads through the whole organism". He is spread through the whole organism. He is spread by conflicting demands, both short-term and long-term, tactical and psychological. Brearley, perhaps the only England cricket captain to have surpassed Douglas Jardine in his acumen, was writing about his own game. But his observations are valid for any contest in which leadership can make a difference between magic and mediocrity.

Rugby is not like cricket in this regard for once his 15 men are on the field of play, a rugby captain does not have an awful lot to do. He can provide leadership by the quality of his play, but he does not formulate much of his strategy. In cricket, as in govern-

ment, however, the captain is all-important. He is like an astronaut to a rocket: he largely determines whether the team of 11 cricketers will soar into space or crash messily to ground.

A captain's job is at its most taxing when the team's opponents are rampant. Atherton lost on Saturday to an assault of flashing blades for which he was tactically unprepared. Tony Blair, Mr Major's adversary, is hardly as frightening as Sri Lanka's batsmen; but he is handling his party's resources with no small amount of panache. The Prime Minister's recent decision over the question of a single currency referendum may stand comparison with Atherton's endless dithering over England's batting order.

Although England's cricket captain has no team members who are sulking, fuming or plotting against him, Atherton and Mr Major do share broadly the same pressures. They field similar demands on their intellect, cope with the shark-teeth of public opinion and fight to retain a dignity which our history demands of those in charge of the nation's institutions. Britain is a cruel place for captains. Our sense of hierarchy is pronounced. And falls from grace in Britain are almost always uncushioned. Ouch!

Call for positive approach to IGC

From the Chairman of the European Movement and others

Sir, The Government will publish its proposals on Tuesday for the forthcoming inter-governmental conference (IGC) which will set out the future direction of the European Union (see letters, March 9). We believe that Britain's national interest will best be served by a realistic, hard-headed and positive pro-European approach.

Britain should support the extension of qualified majority voting where such a change would favour Britain's national interest. Without qualified majority voting the Single European Act, which has brought huge economic benefit to Britain, would never have happened. We must not let simplistic "veto" rhetoric blind us to areas where the United Kingdom would gain by the diminution of the power of any one state to block progress.

Enlargement of the Union, which Britain has strongly supported, will immobilise Europe unless procedures become more efficient. Without improvements in qualified majority voting, enlargement will be impossible. Are we willing to sacrifice the stability of Eastern Europe to Euro-sceptic dogma?

It is generally accepted that the IGC must aim to make Europe more democratic and accessible to its citizens. So Council of Ministers meetings need to be more open and the European Parliament — the democratic link between the European Union and its citizens — and national parliaments should have more say in decision-making.

The Government can avoid turning the IGC into a battle between "them" and "us". Britain must be pragmatic, not dogmatic, if its own interests are to be served.

We believe that these ideas will find favour with the broad pro-European majority that exists in the UK. We commend them to the Government and to the people of the country.

Yours sincerely,
GILES RADICE, Chairman,
EDWINA CURRIE (Vice-Chairman),
CHARLES KENNEDY (Vice-Chairman),
QUENTIN DAVIES,
ROY HATTERSLEY,
DENIS MACSHANE,
TIM RATHBONE,
PETER TEMPLE-MORRIS,
GRAHAM WATSON,
European Movement —
United Kingdom,
Dean Bradley House,
52 Horseferry Road, SW1,
March 10.

Spanish fish row

From Mr David Green

Sir, The Spanish fishermen now to be compensated (report, March 6) had complied with British registration rules before the 1988 Merchant Shipping Act requiring that 75 per cent of their crews and company employees should be British. Some had moved with their families to Britain. Some, with the blessing of the White Fish Authority and with grants from it, had invested in and built new trawlers here, some specially designed to catch types of fish not previously exploited here and intended for sale on the Continent.

Our Government nevertheless attempted to wipe out these established businesses by enacting in 1988 that vessels fishing in British waters should in addition be 75 per cent British-owned.

That legislation contravened the articles of the Treaty of Rome which guarantee EC citizens the right of free business establishment (European Law Report, September 16, 1991). It was inevitable that those threatened would invoke European law to challenge the Government's right to extinguish them.

Since our Government insisted that the relevant vessels should not fish while the court battles were fought, it should not surprise anyone that, having lost, it must now compensate them for their illegally enforced idleness.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID GREEN,
Rhyd yr Harding, Castle Morris,
Nr Haverfordwest, Dyfed,
March 8.

Work permitting

From Mr Michael Steel

Sir, I was cheered to see your photograph today of the Education and Employment Minister, Cheryl Gillan, presenting a work permit to Romanian footballer Iliu Dumitrescu on the pitch at West Ham United's football ground.

With three children in senior school and parental worries about their future careers, and with my wife teaching in a secondary school, I am grateful to know that all is so well that our minister can find time to make personal presentations of work permits. This will give me great comfort in the year preceding the general election.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL STEEL,
1 Downshire Hill, Hampstead, NW3,
March 8.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Peanington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Revenge and reconciliation in Israel

From Lord Mayhew and others

Sir, There can be no conceivable justification for the cruelty of the recent bombings by a faction of Hamas in Israel (letters, March 5, 7, 8).

These dreadful acts damage in equal measure the Government of Shimon Peres, the fledgling administration of Yasser Arafat and the prospects for any sort of reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

At this moment, when an explosion of violence drowns the calls for peace, it is more important than ever for the leaders of both sides to resist the impulse to seek vengeance and to keep open the channel of communication between them. The terrorists represent only a fraction of the Palestinian people and their target is the peace process itself. To break it off is to hand them a victory.

We should remember too that the suicide bombers of Hamas are young men whose whole lives have been lived under Israeli occupation. They have seen their parents insulted and humiliated and they themselves have endured the repression and brutality that are inseparable from occupation — and all the time, for almost 30 years, they have watched helplessly while the Israelis seized the land of Palestinian farmers and built on it the settlements which are condemned by the United Nations as "illegal and an obstacle to peace".

If the Israelis now revert to the "iron fist" policy by which they have tried for so long, without success, to break the spirit of the Palestinians, what good can it do? Surely experience shows that it will only perpetuate the cycle of violence of which the Israelis themselves are for the moment the victims?

By a huge programme of collective punishment directed against all Palestinians without discrimination they have it in their power to do still greater injury to those they have made their enemies — but at a terrible cost, in the long run, to themselves.

Yours faithfully,
MAYHEW,
MICHAEL ADAMS,
JAMES CRAIG,
STEVE SHERMAN,
MICHAEL WALL,
DENNIS WALTERS,
Middle East International,
21 Collingham Road,
Earls Court, SW5,
March 8.

From the Principal of The Muslim College

Sir, The recent tragedies in the Holy Land have saddened, indeed horrified, many of us Muslims. No one wishes to

see innocent lives lost and peaceable people terrorised, but there are those who glory in acts of violence and who equate peace with weakness.

The march for peace in the complex issue of the Middle East has begun, albeit with halting steps; but it is so precious that all men of goodwill must endeavour to their utmost to see that it reaches its destination in a just settlement.

This will require all of us — Muslims, Christians, and Jews — to be both vigilant and forbearing. We must instil within our peoples a set of values in which we accord each other respect and consideration.

We have for so long dehumanised and demonised each other. This has allowed the assassins and the bombers to be hailed as heroes. In this sad and crucial time heroism should be accorded only to the peacemakers. The road to peace is always hard, but need it be so bloody?

I extend my condolences to all the victims of this sad conflict and my prayer that the spirit of our true faiths will overcome the hatred that the wounds of recent events have evoked. The leaders of both peoples need to be far-sighted and more restrained to save the peace process from its enemies.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. ZAKI BADAWI,
Principal,
The Muslim College,
20-22 Creffield Road, W5,
March 8.

From Dr Sahih Ezz

Sir, The Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks, is right to state (letter, March 7) that religion can be used blasphemously to justify great evil.

This is exactly what the Zionists did when they embarked upon creating the Jewish state by slaughtering, terrorising and expelling the Arab inhabitants of Palestine.

It is religion which is being used, in defiance of international and UN resolutions, to justify the occupation of the West Bank and the annexing of Arab East Jerusalem. It is religion which is being used to grant Jews from all corners of the earth a "right of return" while the rightful owners of the land are denied that right, and thus to prevent the removal of even the most provocative Jewish settlements. Had Jewish leaders worldwide condemned and confronted all this evil there is no doubt that the blood of innocent children on both sides could have been easily spared.

Yours faithfully,
S. EZZ,
223 Ilfley Road, Oxford,
March 8.

Arts Council projects

From the Secretary-General of the Arts Council of England

Sir, A "nightmare scenario" of a nation dotted with half-finished lottery-inspired monuments is predicted in Alexander Freeman's report, "Lottery grants raise fears of unfinished projects" (March 4). I would like to give a reassurance that the Arts Council will not allow a project to enter into a phase in its building programme unless it has sufficient partnership funding to complete that phase.

Concerns have been expressed by commercial sponsors and charitable trusts that they will not be able to meet an overwhelming demand for money to make up the partnership element of lottery bids. The Arts Council requires only 10 per cent of the costs of projects up to £100,000 to come from other sources, and 25 per cent for projects over £100,000.

Under the council's criteria, approval by the Department of National Heritage, partnership funding may take the form of a financial contribution towards the costs of the project from private donation, the business sector, from local authorities or from European funds. It can also be support-in-kind — voluntary labour, for example, or donations of land, buildings, equipment or materials, or an agreement to support running

costs during or after the project's completion.

In the first year of the council's lottery operation, while the amount of lottery income and the applications for funding have far exceeded expectations, meeting the partnership requirement has not yet presented major problems. Of the 522 projects so far funded by the council, nearly 62 per cent of the total project costs are set to come from partnership funds. Small community-based projects have had least difficulty meeting their targets.

However, the council is doing some research into those organisations that have already received awards to discover whether there is a problem and, if there is, whether it relates to any particular type of project. It is also in regular touch with recipients of the larger grants to ensure that the targets for fundraising, set by the organisations themselves, are being met.

The Arts Council believes it is important that there should continue to be some partnership element in all lottery grants to ensure that projects enjoy support within the local community and to leverage money from other sources such as European development funds.

Yours faithfully,
MARY ALLEN, Secretary-General,
The Arts Council of England,
14 Great Peter Street, SW1,
March 5.

Four-stackers recalled

From Mr W. R. Galley

Sir, The photograph of the American-built destroyer *Beverly* which accompanied your obituary of Rear-Admiral John Grant (March 1) revived for me memories of over 50 years ago.

I served 18 months in one of these four-stackers, the worth of which lay in their speed and their capacity to fire torpedoes and to drop depth charges. While their boiler technology may have had merit, their general design concept was hardly to be admired: there was no quick access to the upper deck, if need be, and the cambered deck, flush from stern to stern, bowed everything in, as against the break of fore/cle of conventional British destroyers. In 1944, when my own ship, *HMS Lancaster*, on East Coast convoy duty, was in collision and began to list we seemed to queue endlessly before reaching the upper deck through a small hatch via two consecutive ladders.

When built during the First World War these ships had bunks for about 80 men, but with the advent of radar and anti-aircraft guns the complement never had exceeded 120. The seamen's accommodation — cramped below decks in the fore/cle — was overcrowded; my mess, behind a bulkhead

and watertight door, was a trap beyond this — right in the sharp end.

At the upper level (with portholes) were the wardroom and petty officers' mess: below this level, the portholes were blanked-off, so it was constant electric light for us. If one awoke in the small hours, by the night-light one could see rats sniffing around the mess tins. The officers' cabins, amidships, were quite good.

The ship's main armament, a 4in gun on the fore/cle, was often awash. The anchors (Admiralty Pattern-type, relic of sailing-ship days) were secured to flat housings on either side of the bows; their stocks were raised by a derrick on the prow, and if certain pins were not well-greased, anchoring could be a long, cold (and for the bridge) annoying process. Four funnels meant four boilers, and, with magazines fore and aft, a hit amidships could be lethal. When *HMS Bath* was torpedoed in the Atlantic, I fear there were few if any survivors.

After the war, I read that *HMS Lancaster* was to be broken up at Blyth, not far from my home. It is to my infinite regret that I did not take my box camera and see her for the last time.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM R. GALLEY,
189 Mortimer Road,
South Shields, Tyne and Wear.

Authenticity of Bacon self-portrait

From Mr Angus Stewart

Sir, On March 2, during the exhibition at Olympia of works by Francis Bacon and Henry Moore, you printed a letter questioning the authenticity of the recently published self-portrait by Francis Bacon — largely on the grounds that the board on which it was painted could not have been available before 1937.

Winsor and Newton, the manufacturers of the board, whom I have questioned, are unable to sustain that proposition; and in any case the date of the painting is of far less importance than its form and content. In my opinion, these make it self-evident that the painting is by and of Bacon.

In the Olympia exhibition, of which I was the curator, the self-portrait was hung with seven of the paintings which Bacon produced between 1933 and 1989. Nineteen thousand people, including conservators, critics, art historians and the artist's friends and colleagues, saw the portrait. It held its own. There was little dissent and frequent recognition of style and subject. Its relevance to the artist's later paintings was accepted as clear and specific.

The appearance of this self-portrait challenges the belief that, apart from known paintings, Bacon destroyed all of his early work. One early work has now surfaced, and there are known to be later paintings, given or bartered, not yet in the public domain. As these are exhibited the history of Bacon's career will be revised.

In his later self-portraits Bacon is recognisable but distorted, as he is in this one. A self-portrait is listed in the catalogue published by him of the work which he exhibited in his London studio in November 1930. The painting under discussion may be that one; its date, even if established, will not be as important as the painting itself, and its authenticity is clear.

Yours,
ANGUS STEWART,
c/o 123 Kensington Church Street,
London W8,
March 8.

Access to countryside

From Miss Marion Shoard

Sir, Sir David Steel (letter, March 4) argues that walkers must be excluded from the countryside because it is "a place of industry". There are those who have played a much more prominent role in rural industries than Sir David who would disagree.

Sir Simon Gourlay, president of the National Farmers' Union from 1986 to 1991, opened his 800-acre farm to the public eight years ago. He recently told *The Times* (report, February 20): "I have had no problems."

Sir David does not deny that the rural industries of Norway and Sweden appear to have weathered the hazards of a general right of public access with no visible ill-effects. Instead, he asserts that their experience is irrelevant because population densities are higher in Britain than in Scandinavia.

In fact, although Scandinavia's Arctic regions are of course pretty empty, the countryside in parts of southeast Sweden and southern Norway is extremely heavily used for recreation. These areas are not only the target for numerous day visitors from the surrounding population centres. They are also the location of many of the second homes which are owned by a third of the families living in these countries.

Sir David might also care to note the position in Germany, which is far more densely populated than Norway or Sweden. In the 1970s, West German farmers and foresters mounted protests similar to Sir David's against impending legislation aimed at extending public access to the countryside. The legislation nonetheless went ahead, and the effectiveness of Germany's rural industries remains unimpaired.

It is understandable that our own farmers should fear what they have not experienced. Where that experience exists, it seems to show their fears to be groundless.

Yours faithfully,
MARION SHOARD,
15 Melbury Gardens, SW20,
March 5.

Thundering success

From Rabbi David Lincoln

Sir, In a letter published by *The Times* on January 6, 1962, I called for the resumption of diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and Albania.

For some inexplicable reason the Prime Minister of the day, Harold Macmillan, failed to act on my suggestion. Evidently it also had no effect on Sir Alec Douglas-Home, Harold Wilson, Edward Heath, James Callaghan and Margaret Thatcher.

Imagine my delight when your columns announced last week (report, February 22; leading article, February 23) that John Major had shown the resolution that his predecessors lacked. I left Britain because I had imagined that my influence had waned; this reassurance is therefore most welcome.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID H. LINCOLN,
Park Avenue Synagogue,
50 East 87th Street,
New York, NY 10128,
March 6.

OBITUARIES

GEORGE BURNS

George Burns, comedian, died on March 9 aged 100. He was born on January 20, 1896.

GEORGE BURNS became a living legend in showbusiness by outliving all the other legends of his generation. He was the last member of a freemasonry of comedians which included Al Jolson, the Marx Brothers, Eddie Cantor, Jack Benny and the comparatively youthful Danny Kaye. He found himself in and out of fashion, then in again. After a decade in the wilderness, he became a film star, at the age of 70, with his spirited performance as a grouchy old comic in *The Sunshine Boys* (1975). But he maintained that the cleverest thing he had ever done was to marry an Irish actress called Gracie Allen in 1926. By doing so, he not only embarked on one of Hollywood's happiest marriages but discovered the foil against which his particular comic talents could best shine.

As a humorous raconteur in later years, Burns held the stage every bit as effectively as his best friend Jack Benny had done. He built up an instantly recognisable image: the snug grey toupée (but of many jokes), the round glasses, the cigar which transmitted unspoken, often suggestive messages to the audience. He told his jokes in a relaxed, unforced way, not bullying the audience into a laugh, and letting a punchline fall flat occasionally if he wanted. As he grew older, he liked to make fun of his great age. If he were talking about golf, for example, where he once would have said "I just played 18 holes of golf", he would find another way to be funny: "As soon as I get to be 85 I'm going to give up golf. And skiing."

His success came as a surprise to many people, not least Burns himself. In the early years of this century, he moved from theatre to theatre every week, never sure whether he was going to be second on the bill to groups of performing mules or seals. He lived in the sort of forlorn boarding houses often satirised in films of the 1930s, where half a dozen acts would sit around a long table discussing over the soup, in desultory fashion, the problems of being in showbusiness.

What was so refreshing about Burns as an older man was that he blatantly enjoyed his success. He had the knack of being both self-deprecating and pleased with himself at the same time. He laughed at his own jokes, and that laughter was catching. He enjoyed every moment of being a living monument to himself, and to the tradition of vaudeville.

George Burns was only the last in a series of early stage names under which the young Nathan Birnbaum performed: Willy Delight, Billy Pierce, Captain Bets, Jed Jackson, Jimmy Malone. He was born the ninth of 12 children of recent immigrants from Russia in New York's poor Lower East Side. It was an extremely Jewish Orthodox home, and his father was a synagogue cantor, a painfully out-of-tune one according to Burns's account. Burns himself was performing at eight, when he briefly joined the choir at the local Presbyterian church, the reason being that the church was



handing out free wristwatches to choir members.

The watch broke, and he reverted to the family faith. He and some friends then formed the Pee Wee Quartet and sang at the Hamilton Fish Park and on ferryboats. Sometimes they had to dive into the river to retrieve their casually-thrown earnings: "It got so I could sing only when I had water in my mouth," he recalled.

Stage performance did not come naturally to Burns. Unlike Groucho Marx, who was fearless and aggressive, whomever he was talking to, Burns would stammer and stutter as a young man, and he worked hard at comedy. Gradually he learnt what made a joke work, in an almost craftsmanlike way. He put himself through the hard, traditional school of vaudeville, doing two performances a night and the odd matinee.

That was when he met Gracie Allen, a young Irish Catholic who was trying to make it as a serious actress. She already had a boyfriend, but Burns was smitten, refused to take no for an answer, and ordered her to marry him. They became husband and wife in January 1926 (and thereafter called each other, at home, "Nattie" and "Googie"). They teamed up as a vaudeville act, Burns writing the script and Gracie acting as his "feed" on stage. But Burns soon discovered that

it was his wife who was the funny one. She could make a group of scriptwriters who had stayed up all night —

trying to think of a joke — laugh uproariously by just walking into the room and saying "Isn't that nice". On stage, the couple decided to switch roles, and it worked. Their format was relatively straightforward, with the dizzy Gracie returning Burns's straight questions:

Burns: Isn't that boiling water you're putting in the refrigerator?

Allen: Yes, I'm freezing it. Then whenever I want boiling water all I have to do is defrost it.

Burns often had little to do but listen to her. His role was confined to a few dry, gruff asides, and a mordant gaze as he shared his incredulity with the audience. He started smoking on stage precisely because he needed something to do with his hands: "All I ever did was ask her about her brother, point my cigar and she was off." The public, like Burns, were enchanted by Gracie Allen.

The act quickly outgrew the stage. In 1932 Burns and Allen were given their own radio show, which remained on the air in America for 18 years (though it never did as well in Britain). They starred in films, such as the Fred Astaire-Jean Fontaine musical *A Damsel in Distress* (1937). And in 1950 this was followed by a television series,

Burns and Allen, shown in Britain on Sunday afternoons. This ran until Gracie retired in 1958, an event which was considered sufficiently catastrophic to merit the cover of *Life* magazine.

Their act, however, only really came to an end with her death in 1964. George was heartbroken, and began what became virtually a daily vigil at her grave, where he would talk to his wife about the state of showbusiness. He promised her: "I've got my music with me in case they've got vaudeville up there. I'll be with you soon."

In fact, despite Burns's cavalier attitude to cigar-smoking and Martinis, his health remained stubbornly good, and he was far too energetic to contemplate retirement. He was forced, at the age of 70, to learn to perform again on his own. Many people wondered what would become of Burns without his vivacious wife. He was unacceptable to the public with new partners like Carol Channing on tour, and a situation comedy with Connie Stevens flopped. A lean decade followed, with Burns trying to develop his talents as a raconteur. He included in his act too many references to now long-dead friends in the entertainment business for many of the younger generation to find him funny.

What really turned his career around was the making of the film *The Sunshine Boys*. In 1974 Jack Benny — who had been asked to make a film with Walter Matthau — died. The subject of the film was the relationship between two feuding vaudeville stars who come together for a television spot. Burns was asked to take his friend's place. He underplayed his role beautifully, and got an Oscar for best supporting actor. Throughout the filming, Burns had been unable to rid himself of the image of Benny. He and Benny had a unique relationship in an insecure, competitive business.

Several other films followed, including *Oh God*, in which he was cast as the Almighty Himself ("I was too old to play His son"). There was an apness to the apparently bizarre piece of casting. Kenneth Tynan had once said that, among all the actors he knew, only Ralph Richardson could play God. And Richardson had once described himself as "George Burns without the cigar".

Burns spent the last twenty years on the stand-up circuit, sailing effortlessly past his 90th and 95th birthdays, singing and telling jokes about Gracie and the old days of vaudeville, while never once lapsing into sentimentality. He wrote several biographies, and was promising to play Las Vegas at the time of the millennium. He had a pacemaker fitted and other operations, but was fit and sprightly until recently, and gave every impression of enjoying his extreme old age.

When asked for his own thoughts on his success, he said: "You've got to love showbusiness. I always loved showbusiness. After all, what other business could I go into that made people laugh and gave me the chance to wear the same lipstick as Dolores Del Rio?"

He is survived by his son and daughter.

BRIGADIER B. C. BRADFORD

Brigadier B. C. (Bill) Bradford, DSO and Bar, MBE, MC, died on March 4 aged 83. He was born on October 15, 1912.



BILL BRADFORD'S escape from the Germans in the Second World War reads like a Hollywood film script. A young Black Watch officer, captured with the rest of the 51st Highland Division at St Valery in 1940, he made his break for freedom while being marched off to a prison camp in Germany. He first headed towards Boulogne. But the Germans had issued an edict banning all refugees from approaching within 15 miles of the Channel coast, so he had to move back inland.

There then began a hair-raising hike south through wartime France. Walking up to 30 miles a day, and swimming the Loire, he begged for shelter and food from lonely farms, posing as a Flemish Belgian to explain his accent. In one small town he stole someone's bicycle, rode round a street corner and to his dismay found himself overtaking a column of German troops. He pedalled slowly past, keeping his head down, until at the last moment his front tyre blew up with a bang. The soldiers all jeered and guffawed at the crestfallen Frenchman.

Twice he crossed the Pyrenees into Franco's Spain, only to be thrown back by border police. So he lay up in Marseille, gathering intelligence while trying to set up an escape route. At last he stowed away on a ship going to North Africa. Arrested in Oran, he was kept for three days in an underground cell, 12 ft by 6 ft, which shared with 23 other lice-infested prisoners.

In the end he got away in a small boat, which he crewed with a Jewish Free Frenchman and a Communist. Neither of the other two could sail and Bradford had only previously done so on a lake. Nevertheless, they crossed the Mediterranean to Gibraltar, where Bradford landed a year and a day after his escape.

Appointed MBE (milit) for this achievement, he went on to fight at El Alamein, winning the MC as Brigade Major of 154 Brigade. He then served as second-in-command of the 5th Battalion Black Watch, both in the Western Desert and through Sicily. He

landed with the Americans on Omaha Beach on D-Day, as liaison officer to General Omar Bradley, but was then posted back to his old regiment in command of the 5th Battalion.

He won his first DSO in August 1944 at St Julien le Faucon, despite being wounded in the neck when a shell landed on his command post.

He still had the shrapnel inside him when he died. His second was awarded after an operation on the west bank of the Rhine in the following February.

Born in London, Berenger Colbourne Bradford was the son of a lieutenant-colonel who had himself won the DSO in the First World War. His grandfather Sir Edward Bradford had fought in the Indian Mutiny before becoming Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police — responsible for policing Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and her funeral and King Edward VII's Coronation. Another forebear was the brother of Jane Austen.

Bradford, who was always called "Ben" by his parents and "Bill" by everyone else,

went to Eton then Sandhurst before being commissioned into the Black Watch in 1934 and posted to India.

After the war he commanded a Welsh TA Parachute Battalion then later the 2nd Battalion Black Watch. His last command before retiring was that of 153 Highland Brigade at Dundee, 1957-59.

He retired to run the 3,000-acre estate which his wife had inherited in Aberdeenshire. The estate had been devastated six years before by a hurricane and the rest of Bradford's life was spent restoring it. He planted well over a million trees.

In the late 1960s, however, he was found to have Parkinson's disease, and he thus began his last battle — a long drawn-out one against the illness.

A lean, erect, courteous man, with great charm, he was a good shot and a still better fisherman. He continued to shoot until his late seventies and caught his last salmon at the age of 80.

He is survived by his wife Sue, whom he first met at an Inverness ball, and by three sons and a daughter.

PROFESSOR J. C. BECKETT

James Camlin Beckett, Professor of Irish History, Queen's University of Belfast, 1958-75, died on February 12 aged 84. He was born on February 8, 1912.



JIM BECKETT belonged to a gifted generation of Ulster scholars who helped to revolutionise the study of Irish history, transforming it from political polemic to an academic discipline.

He was born and bred in Belfast, the third son of Alfred Beckett, who worked in the linen business, and Frances Lucy Bushell. His mother was from Dublin, and he always maintained a healthy scepticism about the people of Ireland in "ethnic" terms. He was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution and Queen's University, Belfast, where he went to read English, but decided to take history instead.

He graduated with a first in 1934 and became a schoolmaster at the Belfast Royal Academy until 1945, when he was appointed lecturer at Queen's. He became Reader in 1952 and was awarded a personal chair in 1958. This was not only a recognition of his distinction, but an acknowledgement by Queen's that Irish history should be an essential part of its curriculum. He became a familiar figure around the city and university, about whose

campus he confidently strode with, for such a small man, a surprisingly long, lunging stride.

Beckett's reading was as wide as it was deep, and he was master of the survey, which, because of his learning, always had much to teach those whose specialisms were narrower. But his *Short History of Ireland* (1952), *The Making of Modern Ireland* (1965) and *The Anglo-Irish Tradition* (1976) were not textbooks. For Beckett's particular skill was his conceptual flair and his determination, as he himself put it, to ask "what Irish history was about". To this was added objectivity (but

not indifference), sympathy to human nature and beautifully crafted prose.

He was a natural teacher: on one occasion a crowded undergraduate lecture theatre stood up spontaneously to applaud him. He earned the trust and affection of students of diverse opinions, and he bore uncompromisingly the burden of postgraduate supervision. But he once confessed that he had enjoyed most of all reading Shakespeare, in his days as a schoolteacher, round the class in the fourth form on a Thursday afternoon.

Beckett was modest to the point of diffidence, but gained the recognition he deserved, with honorary doctorates from the University of Ulster and from Queen's and from the National University of Ireland. He was a fellow-commoner at Peterhouse, 1955-56, and lectured at universities in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. He belonged to the Church of Ireland, holding deep but unobtrusive religious beliefs. Beckett made a point of not moving with the times but he was more worldly-wise than he let on.

The Ulster Troubles of the last 25 years caused him to break a lifetime's habit of avoiding comment on Irish politics, and his contributions were incisive and just. He once resolved either to marry or to learn to drive a car, but in the event did neither.

AUDREY NICHOLSON

Audrey Nicholson, English teacher and friend to poets, died of kidney failure and bone marrow cancer on March 1 aged 71. She was born on July 15, 1924.

BLUNT, unmarried and maternal not even in manner, Audrey Nicholson became like a mother to contemporary poetry after she retired in 1962 from teaching English at Downshall and Mayfield schools in Essex, Berkeley High School, California, and, lastly, Erkenwald School in Dagenham. She was an exceptional teacher who got very good exam results for those she taught both in England and in the United States. She took her pupils to the theatre and on cultural excursions in her own time — and often on her own money. But it was as the friend to a large group of poets' work that she will be most missed.

In person and in letters, written in her upward-rushing hand, with abbreviations such as LA, for "Love, Audrey", she rallied support for poetry readings and book launches and kept people informed of the triumphs of a

famous poet or the need to send ES to celebrate a poor one's birthday (the two were sometimes one).

She helped the smallest high-standard events, such as the Tormano Poets in Kentish Town, her light blue eyes friendly behind big spectacles, or red hair beginning to pale. She subscribed to poetry magazines and knew the staff of *Acumen*, *Agenda*, *Ambit*, *Aquarius*, *PN Review*, and bought sometimes 40 copies of a poetry book or pamphlet to give away. Yet she was not soft; she decided for herself what was right without any form of equivocation.

She also helped poets. She once gave Eddie Linden a coat. She gave the blind poet John Heath-Stubbs pullovers, escorted him to poetry occasions and typed his manuscripts and letters. John Heath-Stubbs dedicated a poem to her called *All the fun of the fair*, and Gavin Ewart wrote two about her. She was a close friend of Michael Hamburger and Anne Beresford and of Peter Porter. She tried to further the careers of Heather Buck, Jonathan Griffin, George Oppen and those of many unknown young poets.



The Nicholsons were from Ord, Isle of Ormsay, and Sleat on Skye. Her father became a miner in Yorkshire. Her mother's family were pure Yorkshire, and Audrey —

only to hear the cricket scores.

In the 1970s she, Gavin Ewart and the American writer Marjorie Cohen started an annual August Bank Holiday cricket match held on Leytonstone Common near where Audrey lived in Teesdale Road. Writer-cricketers Allen Sygne and Kocijowski became regulars.

It was a ramshackle match of both sexes. Audrey in her whites hitting boundaries (gorse bush) past the waggling hands of other players who had never held a bat in their lives; but she tolerated them provided they, in turn, respected the occasion. After the game she gave a supper in her bedsit, everyone wedged in on borrowed chairs and her dilapidated bed, eating a rice dish and discussing literature.

Gavin Ewart's death last October was one of Audrey's last efforts for poetry, as she helped his widow to organise the friends for the funeral. "Audrey is a saint," said poet George Wightman. She was beginning to be ill herself. She later refused chemotherapy and discharged herself from hospital, only to return later.

Audrey Nicholson is survived by four nephews and four nieces.

Church news

Appointments

The Rev Richard Atkinson, Team Rector, Sheffield Manor: to be Vicar, Rotherham (Sheffield).

The Rev Stephen Bailey, Priest-in-charge, St Michael, Betchworth and St Mary the Virgin, Buckland: to be Rector, St Michael, Betchworth and St Mary the Virgin, Buckland (Southwark).

The Rev William Beaver, formerly NSM, St John the Divine, Kennington (Southwark): to be Honorary Assistant Curate, St Mary Redcliffe w Temple, Bristol and St John the Baptist, Bournemouth (Bristol).

The Rev Jonathan Boardman, Proctor, St Albans' Abbey (St Albans): to be Team Rector, Cufford (Southend) and Downham Team Ministry (Southwark).

The Rev Roger Clegg, to be Chaplain (part-time) of HM Prison, Ashford (Grange York).

The Rev Cheryl Collins: Chaplain in Sheffield University: to be also

Honorary Assistant Curate, St Augustine's, Endcliffe, Sheffield.

The Rev Robert Cooper, Assistant Curate, Whitkirk: to be Assistant Curate, Leeds Richmond Hill (Ripon).

The Rev Martin Cripps, Warden, Les Cotils Christian Centre, Guernsey (Winchester): to be Vicar, Christ Church, Gipsy Hill (Southwark).

The Rev Brian Cunningham, Curate, Merrow (Guildford): to be Assistant Curate, St John the Divine, Kennington (Southwark).

The Rev Andrew Davey, Vicar, St Luke's, Camberwell (Southwark): to be Bishop's Officer for Urban Priority Areas, Church House, Westminster.

The Rev Canon Leonard Deas, Residential Canon of St Woolos Cathedral (Monmouth): to be Master at the Charterhouse in the City of Hull (York).

The Rev John Gilbert, Curate, St Bartholomew, Armley w St Mary of Bethany, New Wortley (Ripon):

to be Vicar, St Jude, Hexthorpe, Doncaster (Sheffield).

The Rev Philip Gulvin, Team Vicar, Sanderstead Team Ministry: to be Vicar, St Matthew, Croydon (Southwark).

The Rev Valerie Hamer, Assistant Curate, St Mary, Caterham and Rural Dean of Caterham: to be Vicar, St Mildred, Addiscombe (Southwark).

The Rev Robert Harvey, Vicar, Wadsworth w Loversall, Doncaster: to retire as from April 30, but to continue as Rural Dean of West Doncaster (Sheffield).

The Rev Ian Hollis, Team Vicar, Maltby: to be Rector, Handsworth (Sheffield).

The Rev Maria Holmden, Curate, Stratford St John, Christ Church and Forest Gate, St James: to be Priest-in-charge, All Saints, Leyton (Chelmsford).

The Rev Margaret E. Jackson, a former Personal Assistant to the Bishop of Southwark: to be Selection Secretary/Secretary for Con-

tinuing Ministerial Education, Advisory Board of Ministry, Church House, Westminster.

The Rev Christopher Jago-Bowler, Assistant Anglican Chaplain, Bristol University and Curate, St Michael and St Paul, Bristol (Bristol): to be Assistant Chaplain, St Boniface, Bonn w All Saints, Cologne, Germany (Europe).

The Rev Geoffrey Keating, Vicar, Penpods (Truro): to be Vicar, St Jude's, Peterborough.

The Rev Robert Lunn, Vicar, All Saints, Orpington (Rochester): to be also an Honorary Canon of Rochester Cathedral.

The Rev Susan Mayors-Hurd, Assistant Curate, St Anne, West Heath and Hospital Chaplain (part-time), West Heath Hospital: to be Priest-in-charge, St Anne, West Heath (Birmingham).

The Rev Harry Morse, Curate, St Bernard, Hamstead (Birmingham): to be Assistant Curate, Downend (Bristol).

The Rev Kevin Tones, Assistant Curate, Thorne, nr. Doncaster: to be Vicar, St Mary, Greasbrough, Rotherham (Sheffield).

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL AND HOME RULE

The following letter from Lord Randolph Churchill was read at a meeting of the East St. Pancras (Churchill) Habitation of the Primrose League, addressed by Mr. R. G. Webster, M.P., last night.

50, Grosvenor-square, March 9, 1893.
My dear Mr. Webster and Friends:—I have much pleasure in complying with your request that I should offer a few words of counsel to the members of "The Churchill" Habitation of the Primrose League, who are to meet to-morrow. In my opinion, the principal work of knights of the Primrose League should be concentrated on the enlightenment of the individual elector, who will before long have to take his part in deciding upon the great issue of the repeal or maintenance of the Parliamentary Union of Great Britain and Ireland. This work of vital importance, if we are to expect the elector to give a true and just decision, can be performed effectively in no other manner.

No one would be less likely than myself to attempt to raise, under ordinary circumstances, any political agitation on the cry of "No Property." But in these critical times it is, I hold, your highest duty to realize the appalling

ON THIS DAY

March 11, 1893



The Primrose League was formed in 1883 in memory of Disraeli. Randolph Churchill, the father of Sir Winston, opposed Home Rule with the slogan "Ulster will fight; Ulster will be right". In September, the Second Home Rule Bill was defeated in the Lords.

dangers which threaten seriously your fellow-Protestants concentrated mainly in Ulster and also scattered thickly in small communities in all parts of Ireland. For them, if a Parliament "separate and independent" be established in Ireland, religious liberty, the inalienable birthright of the English Protestants, will be a thing of the past, inculcate and impress upon the electors the solemn truth of the old and forgotten maxim—Home Rule means Rome rule. All this part of the great work of awakening the mind of the elector is effectively performed by systematic interviews with individual voters. Conversational explanations are as

useful as public meetings and speeches... No efforts of this kind will be wasted.

Secondly, Primrose knights can render excellent service by constantly exposing the guile and the wiles of the enemy. It must be remembered that the average elector... has little if any leisure to study carefully the truth of what he hears on political matters. Of this characteristic, Radical politicians of every degree are keen to take the most unworthy and the meanest advantage. A bitter experience of previous elections has shown us that, for a wholesale diffusion of falsehoods and calumnies, for a possession of an infernal genius for beguiling people by trashy and deliberately lying promises, the lower classes of Radical agents... would outdo in malice and in falsehood the Prince of Darkness himself. Let every Primrose knight be ever on the watch for these foul blows aimed by the Repeal party alike at Protestants and Loyalists. Nail them to the political counter, bring the lie home to the original liar, by statements at public meetings or by communications to the local Press...

Trusting these words may be of some use to you, and wishing you with all sincerity the greatest attainable success in your righteous efforts, I have the honour to be, your obedient servant and faithful friend,

RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL

NEWS

New grammar school era sought

Every large town in England and Wales could have a new grammar school under plans being drawn up by the Prime Minister's policy unit. Parents, businessmen and community groups would be invited to club together to apply for government money to set up and run schools that selected pupils by academic ability. The new schools would have grant-maintained status and be free from local education authority control. Page 1

Thatcher in brush with IRA killer

Baroness Thatcher came within yards of a convicted IRA killer and police stood by as the man and a crowd of about 80 Irish-American demonstrators followed her car down the main street of Fulton, Missouri. The incident appeared to be a serious security lapse. Pages 1, 10, 17

Carling quits

Will Carling announced that he was giving up the England captaincy for "rugby reasons" which had "nothing to do with my personal life". Pages 1, 17, 23, 29

Labour rail rift

Labour was at odds over how Railtrack should be taken into public ownership. Tony Blair is facing mounting pressure from the unions over how he will fulfil his pledge of restoring a "publicly owned, publicly accountable" railway. Page 1

Dublin talks

David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionists, will hold talks in Dublin tonight with John Bruton amid Unionist delight after the Taoiseach launched a stinging attack on the IRA. Page 2

Victim wakes

A musician who spent two years in a coma after an apparent rail accident has regained consciousness to tell police that someone tried to kill him. Page 3

Girl survives

A girl of 13 who was given a one-in-a-hundred chance of survival after contracting meningitis will return to school. Page 3

£1m protest

The cost of policing the Newbury bypass protest passed £1 million, but clashes between tree dwellers and road builders showed no signs of abating. Page 5

Title fight goes to High Court

The Attorney-General has intervened to settle a legal wrangle over who is the rightful heir to Lord Moyinhan, who died in the Philippines while running a string of massage parlours. The favourite to succeed is Colin, a former Tory Sports Minister and Olympic rowing medallist who is a half-brother of the late Liberal peer. Page 7

Dole cut row

Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, defended plans to dock benefits from work shy youngsters at the Scottish Labour Party conference. Page 6

Feathers ruffled

Wildlife groups are at odds over the protection given to birds of prey, once persecuted to near-extinction but now among the most cosseted creatures in Britain. Page 7

Syria wooed

The United States and Egypt were trying to persuade President Assad of Syria to attend the anti-terror summit in the southern Sinai, or send a senior representative. Pages 8, 17

Evolving argument

Tennessee may soon permit schools to sack teachers who portray evolution as fact. Page 10

Grozny rescue

Fighting in the Chechen capital has left Russian troops in such a precarious position that they have had to seek the help of foreign journalists to evacuate their wounded. Page 11

Euro squabble

Europe was offered a foretaste of the forthcoming Maastricht review when France and Britain joined forces to block an attempt by their EU partners to give the European Parliament a role in negotiations. Page 11



A naked model earning £50 in the name of art yesterday during Peter Greenaway's exhibition at the Hayward Gallery. Page 1

BUSINESS

Defence: Britain is set to join with France and Germany to develop an armoured personnel carrier, paving the way for British membership of a European Armaments Agency. Page 40

Markets: Dealers are braced for a mark-down in London prices after Friday's 170-point slump on Wall Street. Page 40

Fighting Back: BET is promising a big dividend increase to discourage investors from accepting a hostile bid from Rentokil. Page 37

Oil: Iraq is asking for United Nations consent to step up oil exports, threatening to undermine prices in an over-supplied market. Page 37

Small Business: What firms want from today's conference. Page 38

ARTS

Books but no looks: If the British feel downcast about the long-delayed British Library, says Marcus Binney, they should remind themselves that it cannot possibly be as poorly designed as France's new Bibliothèque Nationale. Page 12

Bard in bits: The Reduced Shakespeare Company has produced a hilarious new West End show, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*. Page 13

Donizetti revived: At the Coliseum, English National Opera has staged a production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. Page 12

Long-lasting: With nine Top 15 hits in two years, and a screaming full house at Croydon over the weekend, the pop group Eternal have never been better. Page 12

FEATURES

Lonely voices: Although the Tory Party is stuffed with articulate, loyal and often ambitious women, they never seem to get past the supporting roles. Alice Thomson reports. Page 15

Mass executions: They were praying to be simply killed. I heard people whispering that they were hoping to be killed without suffering. Joanna Bale on the shocking evidence of a Muslim boy after the fall of Srebrenica. Page 15

MIND AND MATTER

Star-struck: Astronomy is one of the few areas of science where the professionals trust — and even rely on — the amateurs. Anjana Ahuja on the amateurs who hunt for heavenly bodies. Page 14

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

THEATRE
Centre-stage: the remarkable rise and rise of the mercurial actor Adrian Lester

RACING
Jamie Osborne gives a jockey's view of the jumps at Cheltenham

SPORT

Football: Leeds United and Liverpool produced a surfeit of negative football as they ground out a boring 0-0 draw in the sixth round of the FA Cup at Elland Road. Page 21

Motor racing: Damon Hill won the Australian Grand Prix to equal the 14 victories achieved by his late father, Graham. Hill had stuck to his team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, until Villeneuve's oil problems gave him victory. Pages 21 and 22

Cricket: England's humiliating performance in the World Cup raises important issues concerning the management and structure of the English game. There are lessons to be learnt from a campaign riddled with flaws. Pages 23 and 27

Athletics: Du'aine Ladejo won Britain's first gold medal of the European Indoor Championships in Stockholm when he retained the 400 metres title he secured in Paris two years ago. Page 28

Racing: Conflicting weather forecasts are making life difficult for the racing fraternity in the lead-up to the Cheltenham Festival, which starts tomorrow. Page 31

Golf: The withdrawal, owing to arthritis, of José María Olazábal from the Desert Classic in Dubai managed to overshadow the victory of Peter Hedblom in the Moroccan Open. Page 23

LOTTERY NUMBERS
14, 16, 29, 30, 37, 45. Bonus: 7. There were eight winners.

TV LISTINGS

Preview: The search is on for the champion of British sport, *The Greatest* (Channel 4, 8.30pm).
Review: Lynne Truss discovers that seemingly nice men may bear their wives. Page 39

OPINION

After the Cold War

Lady Thatcher draws parallels between the "alarming complacency" of the post-Cold War mood in America today and the "fatal hiatus" at the end of World War II. Page 17

Pariah nation

Clerical extremists suffered a significant setback in elections to Iran's parliament but the rebuff to Islamic radicalism should not be exaggerated. Page 17

The captain's art

This is not a good time to be a captain in England. Page 17

COLUMNS

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

Of all the European nations, we have much the closest relations with two of the next century's superpowers, the United States and India. Page 16

PETER RIDDELL

The Tories may have to face the traumas of opposition before they learn how to handle Europe without severely damaging themselves. The real difference between the parties over Europe is less on policy than in their internal party conditions. Page 16

OBITUARIES

George Burns, comedian; **Brigadier Bill Bradford,** wartime escapee; **Audrey Nicholson,** English teacher and friend to poets; **J.C. Beckett,** Professor of Irish History. Page 19

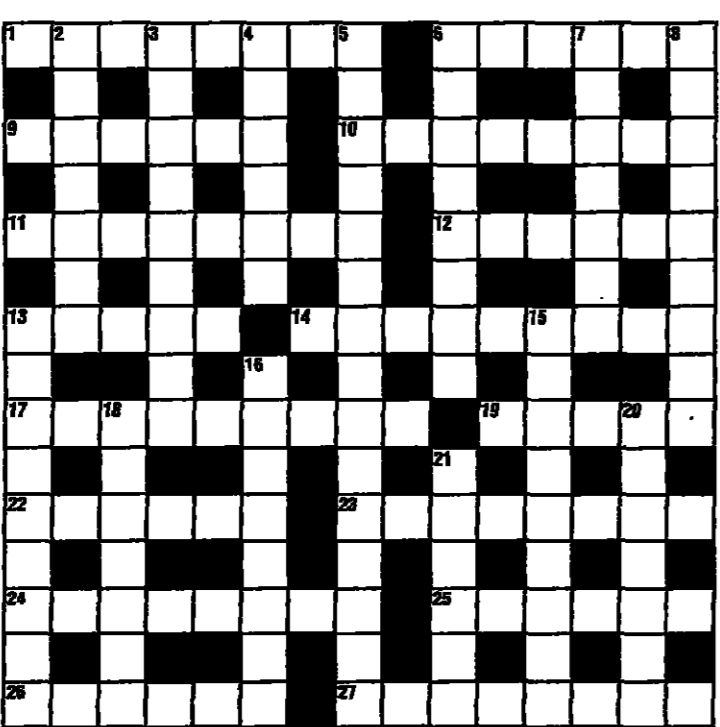
LETTERS

White Paper on Europe: Bacon self-portrait; access to the countryside. Page 17

THE PAPERS

An international summit on terrorism is to be held this week for the first time in history. For the US the main culprit is Iran. Suspicion about Iran are more than justified. The Americans and the Europeans have valid reasons to take differing positions. But this must not be at the expense of the peace process, for then the terrorists would indeed have won. — *La Repubblica*

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,112



- ACROSS**
- Unattractive appearance of unpleasant customer, perhaps? (8)
 - First-class traveller returning aboard ship (6)
 - Broken, as locks may be (6)
 - Rational article about family (8)
 - Wasn't terribly constricted in this country? (8)
 - American lawyer's fair when defending state (6)
 - Mostly suave and elegant, like an opoidian (5)
 - Intermittent sound of quiet supper, for instance (9)
 - Rigid camouflaged shelter beside spring (9)
 - Animal from river in Scottish island (5)
 - Bind end of pole with clean material (6)
 - There's a satisfactory abbreviation for this state (8)
- DOWN**
- Break during march (8)
 - Without doubt they're all yellow, to some extent (6)
 - One who forewarns others, so to speak, when driving (6)
 - Sounds like you will get even in this festive period (8)
 - Enchantment initially generating the love of Paris (7)
 - Not willing to be member of trial crew, say? (9)
 - Limit attention, but cause to be loved (6)
 - Job reserved across sea, producing TV entertainment (9,6)
 - Fish for captain and sailorman (8)
 - Top man, on paper, provided rocks for building work (7)
 - Beauty carrying a gun? It's of little significance (9)
 - Inattentive eccentric in huge den (9)
 - Parade disturbed chaps in trade centre (5,4)
 - Boss used to control engine speed (8)
 - Old-fashioned fuel's strangely cheerless (7)
 - Fell — internal organ showed signs of injury (7)
 - More than one description of scrous membrane heard (6)

ABERLOUR


The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 20,111 will appear next Saturday. The five winners will receive a bottle of Aberlour single highland malt whisky.

Times Two Crossword, page 40

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For regional forecast, dial 0891 500 followed by code:
Greater London: 701
Kent/Surrey/Sussex: 702
Dorset/Devon/ Cornwall: 703
Wiltshire/Gloucestershire/Somerset: 704
Berkshire/Bucks/Oxon: 705
Bedfordshire/Herts: 706
Northants/Lincs: 707
West Midlands & Shropshire: 708
Staffordshire/Warwick: 709
Central Midlands: 710
East Midlands: 711
Yorkshire & the East: 712
North East: 713
Cumbria & Lancashire: 714
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How Hill equalled his father's grand prix record


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'You're far too young, Michael, to become a sourpuss'


SCHOOLS SPORT



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Warne's mentor pitches up in Cumbria

RUGBY UNION



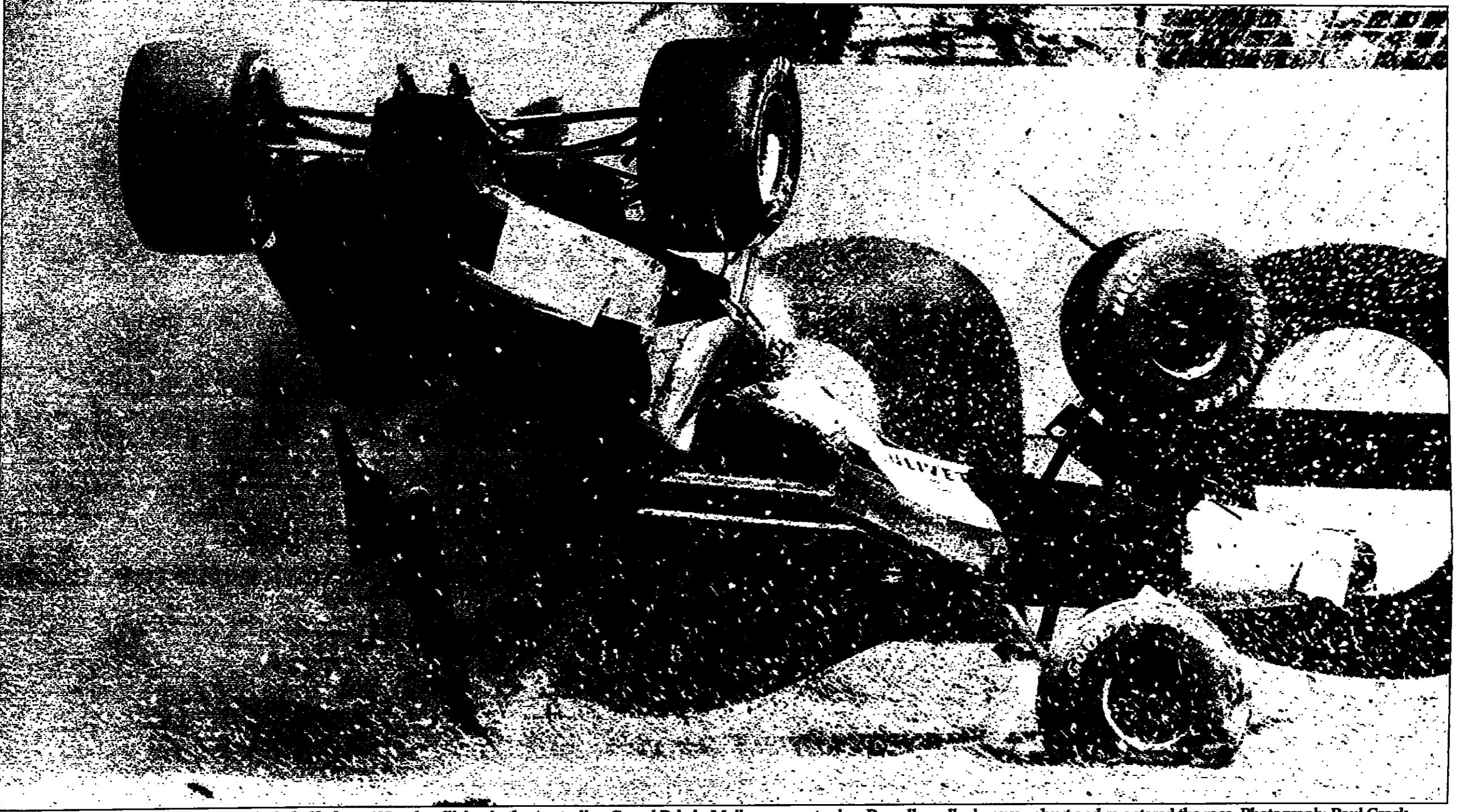
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England's captain of industry earns fond farewells

TIMES SPORT

MONDAY MARCH 11 1996

BRITISH DRIVER CRASHES AT 185 MPH IN MELBOURNE - AND WALKS AWAY



Brundle's Jordan-Peugeot breaks in half after a 185mph collision in the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne yesterday. Brundle walked away unhurt and re-entered the race. Photograph: Paul Crock

Brundle's escape astonishes crowd

FROM OLIVER HOIT IN MELBOURNE

MARTIN BRUNDLE, the British Formula One motor racing driver, escaped unhurt from a spectacular crash on the first lap of the Australian Grand Prix here yesterday and then astonished thousands of cheering spectators by sprinting back up the pitlane and demanding to be allowed to re-enter the interrupted race.

The accident happened seconds after the start of the opening race of the season, which was won by Damon Hill, in a Williams-Renault.

Brundle was travelling at 185mph in his Jordan-Peugeot — a car, ironically, at the centre of a safety row — when David Coulthard's McLaren-Mercedes was pushed into his path. Brundle ran into the back of Johnny Herbert's Sauber-Ford and took off, somersaulting over it. "It was like that scene out of *Top Gun*," Herbert said. "I looked up and I could see Martin in his cockpit looking down."

His car ploughed upside-down into a gravel trap and barrel-rolled four times. "I thought he was dead," Coulthard said. But Brundle, 36, the oldest driver in the sport, persuaded doctors to let him re-enter the race in a spare car when it was stopped to allow wreckage to be cleared away. He crashed out, more mundanely this time, on the second lap.

"When I went up into the air," Brundle said, "I thought 'This is not good'. That is the type of accident drivers fear most. You are out of control — in the lap of the Gods."

Goalless tie leaves semi-final questions unanswered Stalemate satisfies Leeds

Leeds United 0
Liverpool 0

By ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

LIKE George Burns, the FA Cup seems always to have been with us. Today, there is a void: Burns has given us the last laugh and the Cup lies dormant, for the first time in history. The semi-final draw does not have a single team that is qualified to play in it.

Yesterday's blank scoreline at Elland Road between Leeds United and Liverpool, contrived by the tactics from first to last, happened to draw 15,000 below Leeds's capacity gate. That meant that the majority of the 24,632 who could afford the extortionate £24 ticket prices and could resist the live BBC television transmission have somehow found the means to try to support their team all the way to Wembley in a second Cup, just two weeks before they have to pay once again for the Coca-Cola Cup final, for which, surprise, surprise, there is an oversubscription of more than 10,000 desperate people chasing tickets.

"There are players who could finish this quarter-final in the blink of an eye," John Barnes, the Liverpool captain, had forecast at lunchtime. Nobody blinked, nobody dared and, in a match that started tentative and ended tired, the fear of defeat smothered any anticipation of victory, or any ambition to be a glory seeker.

Howard Wilkinson, the

Leeds manager, resorted to sarcasm afterwards when he was asked if he felt sorry for the fans. "Yeah, I said to them [the players] at half-time you've got to make this more entertaining," he said. "Go out and put in an own goal, then two of you lie down, let Liverpool go three up and everyone can go home happy saying they'd been entertained."

He puckered his lips and then, in more characteristic mode, spoke of the draining league and cup programme, the fact that it is only early March and his captain, Gary McAllister, had played all 16 cup-ties this season, plus league matches, plus international. Yet in truth, Leeds, the home team remember, had set out technically to negate the higher potential, smooth passing and rhythm with which Liverpool had trounced them 5-0 in the FA Carling Premiership game at Anfield.

"We went to Liverpool in January, had Gary Kelly sent off and got trolled 5-0 and everybody said we were rubbish," Wilkinson added. "We've conceded no goals

today and some people will say we're still rubbish. That's how it happens sometimes. I was pleased with our discipline and our defending."

Wilkinson matched Liverpool's three centre-back planning, but, down the flanks, he used negative, defensive players and, in front of his backline, he deployed, first, Mark

Photograph 24
Wimbledon's Cup upset 24
Tottenham pay penalty 25
Brazilians struggle 25

Ford to try to prevent the running and invention of McManaman and, when Ford had had enough, he deployed a substitute, Andy Gray, a winger, in exactly the same role.

How little we suspected that two of the early flourishes were to be highlights before the fear really gripped both teams. In the seventh minute, McAteer and Barnes created a flowing manoeuvre down the right and McManaman, slipping the leash of his close marker, fired low across the

face of the goal — low and wide. Then McAllister, inevitably, the core of any Leeds creativity, stretched elegantly away from Thomas, drove through the resistance of Wright and managed to work the ball to Worthington, whose shot was deflected towards James, the goalkeeper.

Liverpool's predatory forwards were finding that the Leeds penalty area was surrounded by a no-go barrier. They were obliged to try to shoot from 30 yards and more; Collymore was first to get the message and twice his long shots, with right and left foot, were comfortably saved by Lukic.

Fowler, who surely tomorrow will be chosen for the full England squad for the first time in his young career, always had that impish turn of speed, that aggressive determination to get into scoring positions, and yet, partly because the service, from McAteer in particular, was so feebly inept, he too, had to try his best from a distance. When Lukic did not fend off the shots, Fowler's direction was a foot wide.

The onus should have been on Leeds, on Yeboah especially, since the long ball to him was their main instinct. He did, midway through the first half, attempt one of his spectacular overhead kicks; the ball brushed off the body of Scales to Worthington and he, the replacement left back for the injured Dorogi, found the angle too acute, his attempted shot being cleared by Babb, but anyway heading behind the near post.

To make the spoiling matters worse, Dermot Gallagher, such a fine referee in Dortmund last Wednesday, was seeing no evil. Five times, tackles came in from behind, two of them by Yeboah on McManaman. The fouls were given, but the cards remained in this indulgent arbiter's pocket, until Palmer gave him no option but to caution him after crudely bringing his studs down on the shin of Barnes. Not surprisingly, Barnes did not see out the contest.

Neither did Brolin. Where was he, this Swedish pimpernel, whose effervescence had been so marvellous at the last European championship and right up to the 1994 World Cup semi-final? He was struggling to find the space, or the pace, of English cup fare.


In consequence, defenders such as Wright and Radebe were comfortably in command, though when Radebe went down near the halfway line and the stretcher momentarily came out, Wilkinson observed: "I thought he had a terrific game, but when he went down, I feared the worst."

He went down as if somebody had shot him, on the exact spot where he suffered cruciate ligament damage last year and lost 11 months of his career. Fortunately, it was only a stud in his thigh.

LEEDS UNITED (3-5-2): J. Lukic — L. Radebe, D. Whelan, P. Bostley — G. Kelly, C. Palmer, M. Ford, (sub: A. Gray, S. Hinks), G. McAllister, M. Worthington — A. Yeboah, I. Brolin (sub: S. Deane, 70).

LIVERPOOL (3-4-1-2): D. James — M. Wright, J. Scales, P. Babb — J. McManaman, M. Thomas, J. Barnes, (sub: J. Redmond, 84), R. Jones — S. McManaman — S. Collymore, R. Fowler.

Referee: D. Gallagher.

FA CUP SEMI-FINAL DRAW			
Nottingham Forest		Leeds	
Aston Villa		Liverpool	
Wed March 13		Replay, Anfield, Wed March 20	
Chelsea		Manchester United	
Wimbledon		Southampton	
Replay, Selhurst Park, Wed March 20		Tonight 8pm	

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SPORT IN BRIEF



MATTHEW BOND
—◆—
TV ACTION REPLAY

tobacco brand names on "vehicles... likely to come within the scope of television cameras". With most cars carrying the name of one brand or another, that looked to be the black flag. But there is a crucial exception for acquired programmes, where coverage of sporting events "may deviate from the code where this is unavoidable". Wheezy sighs of relief all round.

Just as the BBC and indeed Eurosport, its satellite rival, effectively buys in each foreign

Whoever ITV eventually appoints as commentators, it is likely, but not yet certain, that Eurosport will continue to provide an alternative. Its contract for pan-European satellite rights to Formula One also expires at the end of this season and is currently being renegotiated. The fact that its principal shareholder, the French channel, TFI, has recently agreed a multi-million franc contract for the terrestrial rights in France is expected to ease the negotiating process.

rary to me was quite on top form (both took an awful lot of laps to realise that the Williams cars were on a one-stop strategy) but their shortcomings were as nothing compared to those of the Australian director, who after sticking doggedly with the Villeneuve-Hill-Schumacher package, realised in the first third of the race got horribly diverted. The cameras were superbly positioned, but the choice of shots was curious. With the scrap between Hill and Villeneuve at its fiercest, we spent an entire stop – all 63 seconds of it – with Schumacher and his pit crew, most of the world's championship, but as Walker so eloquently put it, it was Hill that was going to pick up the winner's "gum wreath leaf". Don't know about you, but I miss him already.

Hill tracks down his grand prix heritage

only pit-stop just in front of the Canadian, who had stopped two laps earlier, but Villeneuve overtook him immediately. When the Englishman pressured him into making a mistake that sent him skimming over a kerb and on to the grass, but did not press home the advantage. It seemed his chance might have gone. Then Villeneuve's failing oil pressure intervened.

When they got back to the pits, Hill hugged Villeneuve and Schumacher turned up to offer his congratulations to Irvine before he had even taken off his helmet. When they asked the Ulsterman afterwards what his team-mate had said to him, Irvine got the last laugh. "I don't know," he said. "I couldn't hear him."

Results, page 30

Although they can out of steam, Widnes never stopped competing. Who knows what fate might have had in store if a dubious forward pass decision had not ruled out a 28th-minute try by Devereux? They would have led 8-6. Instead, Hunte immediately scored at



HOCKEY: A 36th-minute goal by Melanie Clewlow, the Canterbury midfield player, secured a 1-1 draw for England against Ireland at the UCD Belfield ground in Dublin yesterday. Clewlow, playing in only her second international, hit a powerful shot from the edge of the circle after Kathryn James's effort had been parried by the goalkeeper. Ireland had taken the lead in the sixteenth minute when Sarah Kelleher scored from a penalty corner.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)		Conditions		Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	Last snow
	L	(cm)	Piste	Off-piste		°C	
CANADA							
Lake Louise	135	175	good	heavy	good	cloud	1 8/10
			(Snow a little heavy but skiing mostly good)				
FRANCE							
Avoriaz	155	195	good	varied	slushy	sun	0 23/10
			(Still generally good, challenging moguls on steep runs)				
Flaine	23/2	55	255	good	varied	worm sun	-5
			(Piste skiing remains good in Flaine bowl)				
			(Pistes in great shape: spring snow developing)				
Val d'Isère	190	good	spring	late	sun	6 22/22	
SWITZERLAND							
C Montana	15	250	good	heavy	worm	-2	21/22
			(Typical spring conditions: good high, patchy low down)				
Klosters	10	110	good	varied	late	fine	2 20/22
			(Pistes holding up well to heavy usage)				
Mürren	1/3	40	140	late	heavy	worm sun	0
			(Decent skiing available on upper slopes)				
UNITED STATES							
Vail	185	250	good	varied	good	fine	-7. 17/22
			(Good skiing on majority of trails)				

As one England captain confronts World Cup failure, another ends a glorious chapter

Take a seat, Michael, and see Les Misérables



Michael Henderson pens an open letter to an old friend, imploring him to smile again

Dear Michael, It has been said that indignation is the highest form of love, so please do not be offended by the tone of this letter. Many people are indignant about England's miserable display in this World Cup and, now that your involvement is over, it is surely permissible to offer some thoughts.

You will not disagree that it was miserable, though you may be alarmed that few cricket-lovers, in England or

anywhere, were surprised by your team's woeful performance. Well, being on stage and sitting in the audience have always yielded different views and you are not always the most flexible of men. I would urge you to take a seat in the stalls for a while; you might well get a different picture.

When we last met in London, shortly before England left for Pakistan, I gave you a postcard I had brought back from Boston. It was an early Rembrandt painting and I told you: "Look at this for a month, it will be a lot better than looking at the England card." We had a jolly good laugh about it.

Nobody is laughing now, except at the incompetence of England's cricket, for which you, as captain, cannot avoid responsibility. You are not on your own, of course, but the captain sets the tone of the side and the cricket played

under his leadership is a sort of testimony. So what impression does your team convey? First, it is soulless and utterly anonymous. There is hardly anybody in it that one could engage for a convivial evening (how on earth do you manage?). It must be heart-breaking to spend your social hours with the kind of man who said, without apparent irony: "I hope I finish this book. I've never read one before."

Secondly, it is undisciplined. Fielding is usually a reliable barometer of a team's well-being and this is the worst fielding side in living memory, composed of players who belong to the only truly professional domestic game in the world. The behaviour beyond the boundary is pretty grim, too.

Lastly, it is sullen, to the point that fair-minded people resent the fact that it represents England. Players of no obvious talent strut about as if they were masters of the game. Those who can play a bit show either too little delight or too much.

What on earth is Dominic Cork up to, charging down the pitch after every wicket like a village idiot? This isn't "aggression", it's infantilism. A good start would be to re-examine your own position, assuming you want to carry on. More than anybody, you are responsible for presenting the game's image to a wider public and, though you do not care much for image, that is not an ignoble cause. People see the game through you, as the most visible symbol of a long tradition. You turn 28 next week and



While Atherton must face up to his team's poor showing, Carling can look back on an era of rich success

that is far too young to become a sourpuss. Privately you are excellent company, interested in people and curious about things outside cricket. Why not show something of that personality when you are asked to speak on radio, or appear on television. You are the captain of England, for goodness sake.

Your conduct in Faisalabad on Saturday had no mark of grace. Jayasuriya played an innings that was brilliant by

any reckoning, yet you chose not to applaud him from the field. It doesn't cost a thing to observe the niceties of the game and, if you think that is being soft, then the game still has much to teach you.

You read History at Cambridge, so you will be familiar with the observation about the Bourbons, who never forgot anything and never learnt anything. It is time you learnt from your own experiences that waging a private



Time to calculate the national debt to Carling



Rob Andrew pays tribute to the energy and devotion to duty of his former England team-mate

No one should underestimate what Will Carling has done as captain of the England rugby team for the past eight seasons. It has been a period of unprecedented success, at a time when the game has undergone fundamental change and established a popularity far beyond its standing when he was appointed in 1988.

There has been criticism this season of England's playing style. Last year, it was a huge disappointment — for nobody more than the players — that England did not fare better in the World Cup. That, however, is for people with short memories. For a valid comparison, you must go back to the situation that existed before 1988, when England's stock was very low.

Wherever you go nowadays, you find youngsters eager to meet the top players, to discover more about the game. That is entirely due to England's success under Carling's leadership. He has been at the forefront during this era of change, on and off the field, and I do not believe anyone could have done more.

When England returned home from the World Cup, several of the senior players sat down and decided whether we should continue our international careers. People like me, Brian Moore, Dean Richards and Carling decided we should do so, before other events that we could not have forecast intervened.

Carling's decision to stand back from the captaincy now is, I believe, right for him and for England and I am by no means surprised. His style has altered over the years as he has matured as a person; after all, he was only 22 when he was appointed by Geoff Cooke and by the time we reach 30, most of us have

changed. He has taken charge of different England sides with differing levels of experience but came to enjoy a job that was thrust upon him quite unexpectedly. Indeed, the captaincy has become very much a part of his entire persona.

It is very hard work, especially as the eyes of the world have become concentrated upon him and upon English rugby in an age when the other national sporting teams have lacked consistent success.

His greatest strength has been his ability to draw out what others have to give, the organisation he has offered off the field. On the field, he depended — particularly as a young man — on his senior lieutenants and that dependence will remain, whoever follows him.

Carling had the ability to oversee change on the field, but once a game has begun, there is only so much influence a captain can wield. Even in the tightest of corners, however, when players around him were becoming frustrated, Carling seldom lost composure, even though he must have been seething inside sometimes.

Now he probably needs a change of atmosphere, which may well leave him a more relaxed player and individual. Very few people can appreciate the pressure on the captain of a national team: Carling has suffered from it and he will sympathise with what Mike Atherton is facing.

He has played well this season: he may well play even better over the next two years, which could decide whether he will keep going until the 1999 World Cup. That is in the future; for the present, England should be grateful for the devotion and energy that Carling has given to the game for so long a period.

Olazábal injury worries steal Hedblom's thunder

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN RABAT

THE withdrawal by José María Olazábal from the Desert Classic in Dubai this week overshadowed the victory yesterday afternoon of Peter Hedblom in the Moroccan Open. Olazábal, the 1994 Masters champion, is showing little sign of recovering from the chronic arthritis in his right foot that limited him to seven events in Europe in 1995 and caused him to withdraw from the Ryder Cup team.

The arthritis is threatening the career of the Spaniard, who was 30 last February. The pain does not prevent him from walking or playing golf, but it stops him from playing golf on consecutive days. He is doubtful now for the Players Championship at Jacksonville, Florida, at the end of the month and also for the Masters two weeks after that.

That Olazábal's non-appearance should be more important than Hedblom's maiden victory is an indication of the hitherto low standing in European golf of the 26-year-old Swede and the significance of the Moroccan Open in the grand scheme of things. Almost every day, rain dampened the atmosphere at the Royal Dar Es-Salaam course five miles from here and much of the excitement went out of the tournament when Severiano Ballesteros, competing in his first event

after a six-month lay-off, spectacularly missed the cut on Friday.

What excitement remained was diminished when it became clear that Hedblom was going to record his first victory on the PGA European Tour after leading from start to finish and without coming under any real challenge. Hedblom led by one stroke after 18 holes, by four after 36 and 54 holes. At no time in his last round was he less than two strokes ahead until his last putt on the 72nd green. His round of 72 gave him a total of 281, seven under par, and a victory worth almost £60,000.

The challenge to Hedblom needed to come early on and, for a while, it looked as though



Olazábal: arthritis

Ian Woosnam would make it. However, after getting to three under par with six holes remaining, Woosnam faltered. He was struggling with a head cold and a 70 represented a good round for someone who has not played for almost a month. Santiago Luna, who had closed to three strokes behind Hedblom midway through his front nine, also faltered. Eduardo Romero birdied the last for a round of 69 to finish second, one stroke behind Hedblom, and Wayne Westner tied with Luna for third, two strokes behind.

Hedblom finally closed the door on his pursuers on the 71st, a long par three with water on the left waiting for anyone inclined to hook the ball. Hedblom was 30 yards from the flag after his tee-shot with a four-iron and three putts looked a real possibility — especially for a man who was feeling the pressure and, in addition, uses a long-handled putter.

This time, though, Hedblom struck an almost perfect blow with his 38-inch putter and the ball rolled across the wet green to within inches of the hole. "This is what I have been practising all my life for," he said. "It feels so good."

Scores, page 30

Samuels sets up Storm of protest

BY NICHOLAS HARLING

FROM about four feet inside his opponents' half, Kurt Samuels launched one of the longest — and certainly the most contentious — shots of the basketball season late in Derby Storm's Budweiser League fixture at Worthing Bears. The last of his team's 11 three-pointers in a match of 16 altogether, it described a perfect parabolic curve before bouncing in off the backboard to start the arguments raging.

Did Samuels's shot beat the buzzer? "Yes," the Storm insisted. "No," the Bears protested with equal certainty, knowing how much a win would raise their sagging hopes of a fourth successive play-off title.

For a few moments, it looked as though the decision had gone their way. Receiving the wrong message from the table officials, Colin Irish, their player-coach, hugged Steve Nelson, whose three-pointer four seconds from time had put the Bears 87-85 ahead. John Leahy had then transferred the ball to Samuels, who, showing rare accuracy, gave Derby their dramatic 88-87 victory.

Taking a glimpse at the clock, Samuels was convinced there were still two seconds left when he let fly. "I couldn't even believe Worthing questioned it," he said.

Irish was not so certain. Pointing a finger at the referee, he said: "That's Trevor Fountain for you. That was the second 50-50 decision in the game and maybe it's a coincidence that we got neither of them."

Fountain and Colin Fairburn, the umpire, had sought the final verdict from Mike Pollock, the commissioner who, after consulting the timekeeper, ruled in Derby's favour.

There was rather less drama on show in the other game on Saturday. After Friday's 101-81 win at Manchester Giants, the Birmingham Bulls trounced Newcastle Comets 107-77 with the help of 33 points from Tony Dorsey.

SUCCESS.
IT'S A
MIND
GAME.

Campbell plans emotional rescue

FROM PATRICIA DAVIES IN CORAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA

TIM HERRON and Michael Campbell, two young men yet to win on the US PGA Tour, were hoping to hold the old guard at bay in the final round of the Honda Classic at Eagle Trace yesterday — although the weather forecasters were predicting mayhem.

Friends from their days on the Australian Tour, Herron, a 26-year-old rookie from Minnesota, and Campbell, a 27-year-old Maori, were paired together in the last match on what was initially a wet but windless afternoon.

Herron, the leader since his opening round of 62, was on

202.14 under par, three shots ahead of Campbell and four ahead of Mark O'Meara, the defending champion, and Mark McCumber.

Campbell, of whom great things are expected, especially after his third place in the Open Championship last year, said he learnt a lot on the last Sunday at St Andrews, having led by three shots after three rounds. "I was out of control emotionally," he said. "I was thinking of a thousand things, getting too far ahead of myself, thinking I'd be set for life financially if I won, things like that. Next time I'm lead-

ing, I'll know how to control those emotions."

Nick Faldo was seemingly back in control of his game after successive rounds of 68 and impressed the locals when he had a heckler thrown off the course on Friday. The man abused Curtis Strange, Faldo's playing partner, referring to Strange's bogey, bogey, bogey finish against Faldo in the Ryder Cup. "It was nasty," Faldo said, "and he had no right to do it. He has no idea of the pressure of playing at the top of sport."

Scores, page 30

Time for Crazy Gang to grow up

Antics of Harford show Wimbledon in their true light

Chelsea 2
Wimbledon 2

BY ANDREW LONGMORE

TYPICAL. Just when you were developing a sneaking affection for Wimbledon, they go and ruin it. Not by their football, which at times in this rumbustious cup tie bordered on the elegant, nor by their bravado, which was as rampant as ever, but by their unremittingly boorish behaviour.

The sight of Mick Harford haranguing and abusing Peter Jones, the reserve official, the linesman and then the Chelsea bench after Gullit's free kick had put the home team ahead, was enough to make any neutral in the crowd pray that Wembley in May will not be the setting for another chunk of us-against-the-world paranoia. Even the Wimbledon physio, face contorted with rage, could be seen jabbing a finger at officials. Team spirit run riot. All for one, one for all.

Later, with utter predictability, came the justification. "I've watched a lot of football and I cannot remember another incident like it," Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, said. "Most of my players were disappointed with it because Steve Clarke did exactly the same and no free kick was given."

The decision that so angered Wimbledon concerned a back

pass by Cunningham. Graham Poll, the referee, deemed it deliberate, so penalised the goalkeeper for picking the ball up, quite rightly as the cameras proved. But Wimbledon had already decided they would get no justice from the league's most prolific disciplinarian, who has sent off three Wimbledon players this season, and had soon dusted down their persecution complex. "The last time I got anything away from home, I was playing for Tottenham," Kinnear added.



Still the Crazy Gang, it is a very tired act now after all these years. All Kinnear would say about Harford was that he was "a bit naughty", which was not quite what his opposite number, Glenn Hoddle, had in mind when he wagged his own finger at Kinnear shortly after the final whistle. The tirade was not against Kinnear himself, it was just a sharp lecture about the nature of managerial responsibility.

"He's passionate, he's committed, he's a smashing bloke," Kinnear said by way of defence to Harford, who departed after the final whistle

with a final two-fingered gesture to the crowd. Smashing bloke.

The disappointing aspect of this nonsense is that Wimbledon need no longer perpetuate the myth. They are a very tidy football team and can stand on their own feet as such without all the baggage handed down from the Fashanu era. It was not too hyperbolic for Vinnie Jones to claim that, in the first half, Wimbledon actually played more like Chelsea than did Chelsea. Some of the passing in midfield, where the quicksilver Leonhardsen was prominent, was positively picturesque and the speed of their counter-attacks left Chelsea in some disarray, happy to reach half-time on level terms.

Gullit, who, despite scoring off Jones's calf, had one of his less influential afternoons, was critical of his side's attitude. "We gave them too much respect," Gullit said. "When we played our game more aggressively, thought more about ourselves and went for it, we created chances and played some good football."

Twice in the opening 20 minutes, Chelsea were exposed down their right side, a header down by Goodman setting up Harford for a shot against the post and a solo effort by Leonhardsen well saved by Hitchcock.

At the front, Hughes was well marshalled for the second consecutive weekend by Dean Blackwell, another product of the Wimbledon youth team, who had been pencilled in as a first-team regular when John Scales was sold to Liverpool, but tore an Achilles tendon and was out for 18 months. He has only recently returned and his partnership with Perry is already providing much needed solidity in defence.

Then there is Harford, all arms and legs and mouth, but, at 37, making a much better job of servicing his front line than Spencer, recalled to play a similar role for Chelsea. What irritated Hoddle, though, apart from Harford, was his side's refusal to learn basic lessons.

At Selhurst Park last week, they fell asleep soon after scoring; they did it again on Saturday. No sooner had the celebrations for Gullit's goal died down than Hoddle's headed in Kimble's free kick for the equaliser, stunning the posse on the Wimbledon bench, who were too busy arguing to notice, and disappointing the unbiased, who did. After all, who would you rather have gracing the final at Wembley, Gullit or Harford?

Chelsea (4-4-2): K. Hoddle — M. Duberry, S. Clarke, E. Johnson — D. Patterson, R. Gullit, D. West, T. Phelan — J. Spencer (sub: G. Pearson, 60min), Hughes, P. Furlong (sub: N. Spinkman, 77). WIMBLEDON (4-5-3): N. Sullivan — K. Cunningham, D. Blackwell, C. Perry, Kimble — R. Eadie, V. Jones, O. Leonhardsen — M. Harford (sub: M. Gayle, 77), E. Eklou, J. Goodman (sub: D. Holdsworth, 64). Referee: G. Poll.



Tony Yeboah, the Leeds United striker, shows a deft touch in the goalless FA Cup quarter-final at Elland Road yesterday. Report, page 21

Agile Crossley saves the best till last

Tottenham Hotspur 1
Nottingham Forest 1
(aet: 1-1 at 90min)
(Forest win 3-1 on pens)

BY DAVID MILLER

IT WAS, without question, Mark Crossley's goal. First, there had been his remarkable double-save against Bayern in Munich. Now came three saves in a penalty shoot-out against Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday. No wonder he ran almost clean out of White Hart Lane in celebration after the last, and best of them, which denied Sheringham.

The Nottingham Forest goalkeeper's agility had been a key factor in restricting the Germans to a 2-1 lead in the first leg of the UEFA Cup quarter-final. His notable contribution at the conclusion of a frenzied FA Cup fifth-round replay deservedly gave Forest another quarter-final at home to Aston Villa on Wednesday.

In the week that Bill Nicholson, the man who guided Tottenham to their finest glories, celebrates 60 years at White Hart Lane, the present team will reflect with anguish on many aspects of this Cup tie, quite apart from the first two dolly-shots from the penalty spot by Wilson and Rosenthal. It will be difficult for them to find a convincing argument that they were in any sense robbed.

Certainly, Forest were fortunate when, seven minutes from the end of extra time, Pearce appeared from nowhere to scoop Rosenthal's lobbed shot from the left off a deserted goal line. Crossley having been drawn out of position by a cross from the right. More particularly, Tottenham supporters will be mean the fact that, in the final minute of scheduled play, with both sides falling apart through fatigue on a scuffed, soft pitch, a breakthrough shot by Slade hit the right-hand post with Crossley beaten. Slade had entered the fray at the extra-time interval, replacing Armstrong, who had singularly failed to exploit the uncertainties of Haaland.

Forest's deputy centre-back, Forest had often looked a class apart for all but the quarter of an hour before half-time, after Sheringham's stunning equalising goal from a free kick, and the last ten minutes of extra time, by which time Woan, Gemmill and others were running short of fuel. Indeed, in the first quarter of an hour, the game was played almost solely in the Tottenham half of the field. Mabbitt at times defending desperately to hold the middle. Edinburgh and Campbell on either flank anxiously trying to stem the flow of Stone and Woan.

At one point, Calderwood was reduced to booting into touch like some non-League player. Nicholson must have closed his eyes and thought of other days, of Maurice Norman and Mike England. There was a moment early on when Fox, cutting in on the right, found Armstrong, whose sharp diagonal cross to the far post was narrowly missed by Sheringham as he lunged, feet first. Soon afterwards, Forest were in front.

Roy, whose control on a difficult pitch was a delight, caught the Tottenham rear-guard square in breaking away on the left. Drawing Walker, he calmly steered the ball into the right of an empty net.

From here on, Forest played with authority, Tottenham without coherence.

JOHN BARR



Crossley celebrates after his penalty shoot-out saves put Tottenham out of the FA Cup

Gemmill might have increased the lead with a fierce shot when a free kick was partially cleared. Then, just after the half-hour, a free kick for a foul by Haaland on Armstrong brought Tottenham the goal they barely deserved at this stage. A group of Tottenham players gathered round the ball and, while Howells turned and walked clear to the left, Sheringham ran round the back of him and struck a marvellously accurate, curving kick into the top corner. Briefly, Tottenham flourished. Sheringham booked wide from a half-chance created by Fox. Rosenthal headed just over the bar from Armstrong's hanging cross from the left. Fox drove crisply at Crossley when Sheringham sent the ball shearing across the goalmouth.

But that was about it until a late near-miss by Mabbitt, who, early in extra time, volleyed wide from no more than five yards. Before that, Forest had been back in charge, so that even when the contest began to disintegrate in company with teamwork all round, it still seemed that the visiting team would win.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (4-4-2): Walker — S. Campbell, C. Calderwood, G. Mabbitt, J. Easton (sub: S. Mowbray, 100min) — R. Fox, D. Howells, C. Wilson, R. Rosenthal — C. Armstrong (sub: S. Slade, 100). E. Sheringham.
NOTTINGHAM FOREST (4-4-2): M. Crossley — D. Lytle, A. I. Haaland (sub: D. Phillips, 67), S. Chettle, S. Pearce — S. Stone (sub: P. McGee, 100), C. Earl-Williams, S. Gemmill, W. Woan — K. Campbell (sub: J. Lee, 120), B. Roy.
Referee: G. Willard

Unsettled Wright may join Chelsea

BY JOHN GOODBODY

CHELSEA are the favourites to sign Ian Wright if the Arsenal board agree to release the forward who has been the Highbury club's leading goalscorer over the last five years.

Wright, 32, who is valued at £3 million, has handed in a written transfer request after several disagreements with Bruce Rioch, the Arsenal manager.

Wright said: "I am not happy at Arsenal any more. Certain things have happened this season which have upset me. Rioch has his own ideas on how he wants to play the game. Unfortunately, I do not think I fit into the system he wants to play."

"However, you do not walk out on a great club like Arsenal in an afternoon. I spent ages trying to sort out in my mind what to do for the best. It was a difficult and sad decision for me."

Rioch has already tried to smooth over the difficulties with Wright by making him captain in the absence

through injury of Tony Adams. However, Rioch will face an awkward choice for the FA Cup Premier League game at Wimbledon on Saturday when Wright, fit and free from suspension, will challenge Dennis Bergkamp and John Hartson, who has scored three goals in the last three games, for the two places in Arsenal's attack.

Wright has scored 19 goals for Arsenal this season to continue his fine record since he joined the club in 1991. He was a member of the team that won the unique double of the FA Cup and Coca-Cola Cup in 1993.

The England international, who is under contract at Highbury until he is 36, is understood to have been strongly supported during his time at Highbury by David Dein, the Arsenal vice-chairman. However, he has irritated everyone at the club with his poor disciplinary record, which has frequently meant that he has had to miss important games.

Ellis has no peers in Blackpool's galaxy

Blackpool 1
Notts County 0

BY MARK HODKINSON

BENEATH its famous tower, Blackpool is awash with stars. The North Pier alone can boast three dozens of light entertainment in Les Dennis, Su Pollard and Roy Walker. The town's football club has its own nova, a swashbuckling idol with a roguish air named Tony Ellis. He has the polished face and phoney posture of a model staring down from a poster in a barber's shop. After every pass or darting run, he readjusts his hair and wipes the surplus gel onto his tangerine shirt.

Blackpool's promotion confrontation with Notts County was a stage specially made for his swagger. His first call came after just seven minutes when he slammed his studs into County's grounded goalkeeper, Ward. He apologised excessively. Handkerchiefs were wrung in the stands.

The game's solitary goal came when Morrison headed on a long throw and Ellis nodded in from close range, his fringe barely ruffled. It was an isolated palpitation in a game that lay moribund until the final minutes.

In between, Blackpool played the weather at its own game. Instead of emulating County's gracious but flawed football, they aimed the ball at passing seagulls and charged after it. The demented wind, blowing in from the Irish Sea, made anything else futile.

The balloons brought by the home fans to brighten up their shabby ground — stadium being

somehow too grand a term for Bloomfield Road — blew straight past them to roam the flat downs of the fylde. When the ball landed, Morrison, Blackpool's captain, usually found himself beneath it. Head shaved, thighs like beer barrels, he stalked the midfield, the type of player who is outstanding in a poor match and barely recognisable in a good one; he was magnificent in this one.

With only four minutes remaining, we were treated to the game's only real piece of skill. Jones sent a free kick spinning and dipping into the net. County celebrated. Their fans danced on the crumbling terraces. A linesman's flag suddenly shuddered in the wind. The effort was disallowed. Shamefully, there were scuffles as County players surrounded officials at the end. A police officer had to accompany them to the dressing room.

Afterwards, Sam Allardyce, the Blackpool manager, empathised with Colin Murphy, his counterpart: "I can understand Colin's frustration. It was a smashing free kick. They had three of four people behind our wall. I don't know whether they impaired our keeper's view or not. The offside is ludicrous these days. All this talk over what is an active area or whether someone is interfering with play. The referee has only got a split-second to make a decision."

Blackpool (4-3-3): E. Nixon — M. Bryan, D. Linton, D. Blackshaw, A. Beeson — M. Morrison, M. Mellon — J. Quinn (sub: C. Beeson, 70min), A. Pearson, A. Ellis (sub: A. Webster, 64).
NOTTS COUNTY (4-5-3): D. Ward — C. Hoyle (sub: S. Pinner, 70min), S. Murphy, G. Shroder, J. Barnardough — P. Rogers, J. Hunt, A. Agnew — G. Merritt, G. Jones, J. Bamberby.
Referee: G. Carr.

Frantic Celtic reprieved with time running out

T here are days when teams are driven through fear and despair before they can relocate their own worth and win. Celtic took 88 minutes to complete a tortured journey across those badlands yesterday, for, at that stage in the Tennents Scottish Cup quarter-final, Dundee United still led 1-0. A draw, let alone a 2-1 victory, seemed unfeasible.

Celtic, on their home ground, were barren of invention by then and offered only urgency. It was enough. From a free kick on the right, McNamara lighted the ball into the six-yard box where the visitors' goalkeeper, Maxwell, failed to challenge and van Hooijdonk crashed a header into the roof of the net.

The winner came almost immediately. McNamara drove into a tackle in midfield, forcing the ball on to Thom, who simply streamed away from Welsh before clattering home a drive that contained no subtlety, but a vast amount of glee. In that fashion, he took Celtic through to join Rangers, Heart of Midlothian and Aberdeen in a semi-final draw to be made on Tuesday.

Celtic, a club that always takes an interest in omens, will be excited by the manner of victory yesterday, no matter the anguish that preceded it. Such exploits, after all, studded the club's season in 1985 when the double was won. United, too, recognised the echoes, for it was they who lost the Scottish Cup final to Celtic, also in the closing seconds, that year.

One would never have guessed that they were about to repeat the ordeal yesterday, especially not

when they were in command and threatening to add further goals in this second half. United may have been relegated since winning the Scottish Cup in 1994, but they have not reconciled themselves to obscurity.

This was a tie relished at Tannadice, an occasion where intelligence and planning might have met with more reward than they do in the normal, humdrum fixture list. The niceties of strategy, how-

ever, were scarcely under discussion when the visitors, during the opening exchanges, were being pressed into their own goalmouth.

The greatest single factor in creating the distress that would wash over Celtic lay in a failure to beat Maxwell in those early, care-free stages when chances were still being manufactured regularly. Thom, Grant and van Hooijdonk might all have forced shots past the keeper and McNamara certainly should have done so, but slapped weakly at the ball after being put through by McLaughlin.

As the smoke of Celtic's bombardment began to clear, however,

KEVIN MCCARRA



Scottish commentary

Gillingham happy to win points, not friends

Gillingham 1
Preston North End 1

BY KEITH PIKE

AS SPORTING fairy tales go, this one takes more believing than most: impoverished club from footballing backwardness, on the verge of extinction, find wealthy knight dismounting from trusty white limo in car park, appoint receivers' sweep all before them, riding into the promotion sunset a year later, violins and hankies to the fore.

Yet, even as Gillingham edge ever closer to happy-ever-after-land — this draw on Saturday against their nearest rivals maintained their three-point lead in the Endleigh Insurance League third division with 12 games to go — they are finding friends harder to win than matches. For all the improbable nature of their impending triumph, the Kent club is discovering that success without style is often regarded as no success at all.

And style is in short supply at Priestfield Stadium. You can marvel at an army of six-footers able to belt the ball into orbit and tackle themselves into a frenzy, witness every long-throw and free-kick routine in the manual and overdose on passion and commitment — but there is no craft, no flair, no guile. No style. It is football to capture the title, not the soul.

It is also highly effective. The goal with which Simon Davey put Preston ahead in the 49th minute, after a sweeping move the length of the pitch, was only the fifteenth that Gillingham have conceded this season and only the fifth at home.

England's most prolific attack having breached its meanness defence, Preston were then undone in predictable fashion 18 minutes from time. Harris rising highest from a scrum of bodies six yards out to meet Naylor's free kick. The approach of the teams had been neatly reflected in the quality of the goals.

Not, it has to be said, that the Gillingham supporters who filled the ground seemed bothered, and who can blame them? Nine months

ago, the club was £3 million in debt and in the hands of administrative receivers when Pat Scally completed his takeover within two hours of a Football League deadline. And while the team that Tony Polts has assembled is not pretty to watch — the Gillingham manager was initially appointed by the receivers to value the squad — and has a poor disciplinary record, it is better than no team at all.

"We are a team, and a club, that will fight its way out of any corner," Scally said. "We are not going to be trodden on — we have had enough of that in the past. Now they [the supporters] can hold their heads up and be proud of what they have achieved." Survival, not style, is the name of his game.

GILLINGHAM (4-4-2): J. Stannard — R. Green, A. Butler (sub: D. Purnum, 60min), M. Harris, D. Naylor — R. Carpenter, S. Cusack (sub: D. Freeman, 64), M. Harris, N. Smith — L. Fortune-Weir (sub: R. Hall, 80), D. Butler.
PRESTON NORTH END (4-4-2): J. Vaughan — P. Spencer, D. Moyes, R. Wilcock, D. Barclay — P. Bird, S. Dainton, G. Atkinson, I. Beeson — A. Smith, S. Walker.
Referee: M. Pearce

Simon Barnes sees Middlesbrough's men from Brazil struggle to make an impact

Experiment failing to counter pull of gravity

To be relegated with one Brazil international in your team could be regarded as a misfortune, to be relegated with two would look like carelessness. Middlesbrough went to West Ham United with Branco and Juninho and still lost, for the tenth time in the last 11 games. The other was a 0-0 draw.

Odd to recall that Middlesbrough began the season by winning nine of the first ten and, in October, reached the dizzy heights of fourth. A casual glance at the table suggests they are safe, but not when you recall how much downward momentum they possess.

It was a connoisseur's collection of subs down in the East End on Saturday. Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, put both his Brazilians on the bench — not, one imagines, because competition for places is so intense that a man with 85 caps for Brazil cannot get in the team.

No, Branco has not played a full game since mid-December and is short of fitness, and Juninho had flown in from Brazil that morning after taking part in the Olympic Games qualifying tournament. West Ham responded with some spirited subbing of their own: Dumitrescu, 52 caps for Romania and at last granted his foolishly-delayed work permit, and Dani, the Portuguese prodigy.

Testing times for Middlesbrough and, as people often do, they responded to adversity by going silly. In football, you get awfully exposed when you go silly — and that counts ten times over for goalies. The game was a minute old when it was put beyond Middlesbrough's reach by their own goalkeeper, Walsh.

What possesses goalies to get up to gaudy monkey tricks of ball-juggling in the goal-mouth? There seems to be a self-destructive streak in all goalkeepers: perhaps you can't be a goalie without one. Any-

way, Walsh took Cox's hurried back-pass and flicked the ball sweetly from one foot to the other for a nonchalant volleyed clearance. Or rather, he tried to and made a hash of it.

Cox — I wonder how many goals have been conceded by players who have underestimated his speed of thought in the penalty area — zoomed in on the error and Dowie tucked the loose ball home. West Ham proceeded to dominate and should have settled matters long before they did.

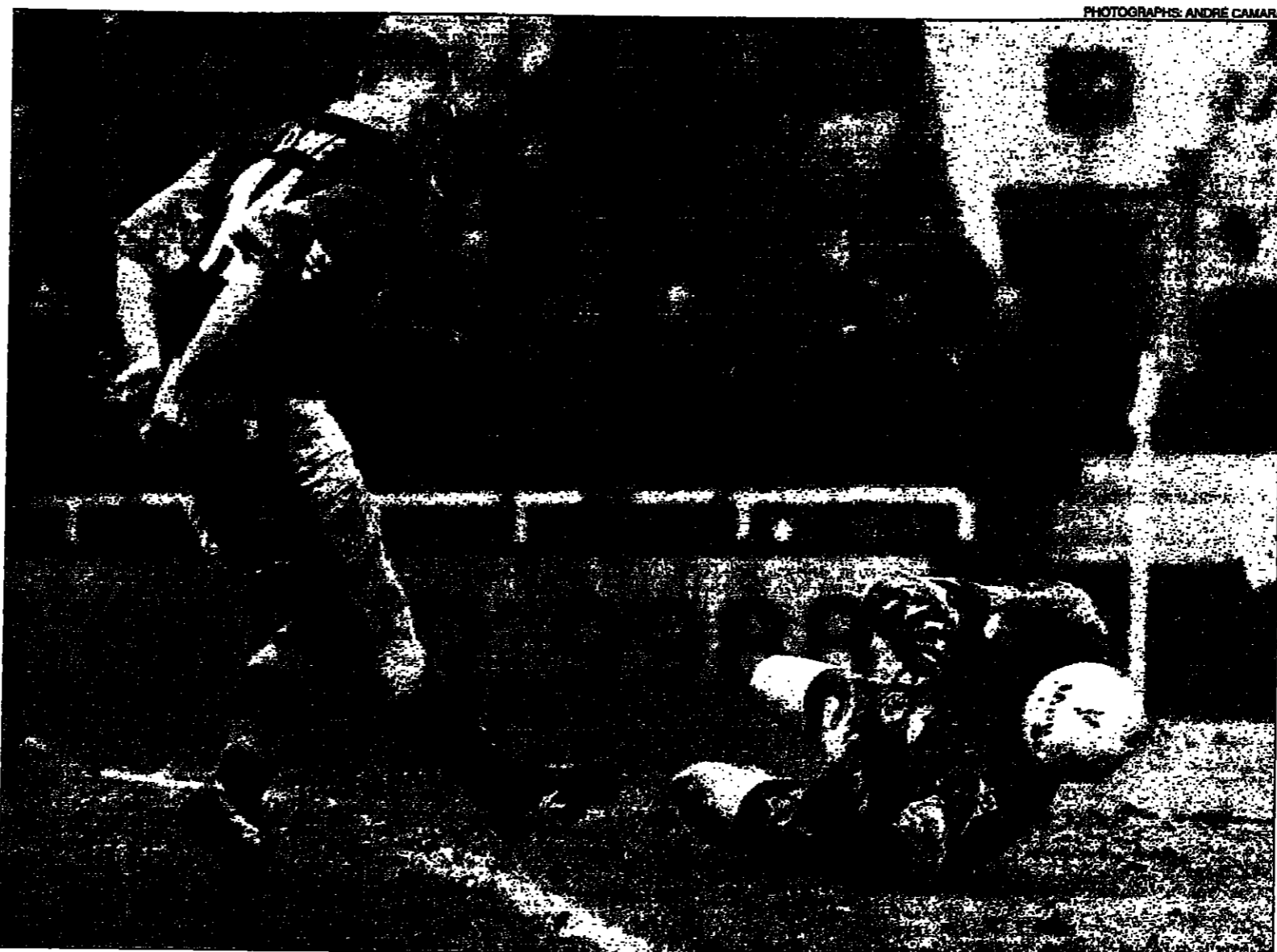
As it was, they needed a dodgy penalty. The ball struck a divot and bounced up to hit Cox on the arm. The referee, who could only have decided that Cox had taken leave of his senses, awarded a penalty and Dicks dispatched it with a left-footed thump.

So it was time for the Brazilians. Juninho appeared on the hour and Branco ten minutes later. Odd it was to see how unassailable the little Brazilian has been. Some of the exotisms of the season have been unqualified successes: Juninho, supposed to be one of the greatest players in the world and the Premiership coup of the season, has had a negligible effect on his team.

In his early days at Chelsea, Gullit was always sending immaculate balls to colleagues who failed to control them, passes to players who were not running into the right spaces or making himself available for passes that never came. But there is a didactic streak in Gullit and a large and self-confident personality as well. He has educated his team.

Juninho, younger and lacking Gullit's authority, remains an outsider. Brilliant touches, swooping runs, but his colleagues don't seem to know what to do about him. He seems out of place, too good for the company he is in.

It is a bit like meeting Einstein at the pub. "Yes, but how much choice did God have in creating the universe?" Blimey, listen to him, he



Walsh, the Middlesbrough goalkeeper, is confronted by Dowie, scorer of the first goal in West Ham United's 2-0 victory at Upton Park

doesn't half go on. I reckon Boro will go down, don't you? Or perhaps I am wrong, and it is not incomprehension but admiration — Juninho's colleagues just stop and watch him play. Whatever the cause, the Brazilian Experiment isn't working. No one seemed to know what Branco was doing, still less Branco himself. I

wonder: did Branco and Juninho sit together on the coach heading back north and discuss the match in Portuguese, which, like their play, is beyond the understanding of their colleagues?

"Tell me, Juninho, can any of the Middlesbrough players actually trap a football? And who was that fellow with the

bad haircut playing alongside you?"

"Oh, that was Barnby: he cost £5.2 million, half a million more than me."

"I wish you wouldn't make jokes like that, young fellow."

"Joking? I wish I was, old man."

Middlesbrough have eight games left, and Harry Redknapp, the West Ham manager, reckoned they needed two wins to be safe. This would be a comforting thought if the task of winning one didn't look so difficult. Einstein reckoned the gravitational field was represented by curved space-time. Meanwhile, Middlesbrough, beaten 2-0 on Saturday, continue to plummet downwards.

WEST HAM (3-1-4-2): I. Mikoski — S. Potts, S. Bile, J. Dicks — I. Beshoo — T. Brackley, D. Williamson, K. Rowland, M. Hughes — A. Coker (sub: I. Dumitrescu, 57min), I. Dowie.

MIDDLESBROUGH (3-4-2-1): G. Walsh — N. Cox, M. Peterson, D. Whyte — C. Morris (sub: Branco, 70), G. Kavanagh, R. Munnice, C. Fleming — C. Higgins (sub: Juninho, 60), N. Barnby — J. A. Farrant (sub: J. Hendrie, 60). Referee: M. Reed.



Juninho, left, and Branco await their chance to come on

PREMIERSHIP AT A GLANCE					
	Played	Points	Goal diff	Recent form	
1 Newcastle	28	61	+26	WWLDL	
2 Manchester Utd	28	60	+22	WWWWW	
3 Liverpool	28	55	+22	WWWWW	
4 Aston Villa	30	55	+16	WWWWW	
5 Arsenal	29	48	+12	DWWDD	
6 Tottenham	28	48	+10	LDLWW	
7 Everton	30	47	+14	WLWWD	
8 Chelsea	29	43	+4	WLLWD	
9 Nottingham Forest	28	43	-1	WLLWL	
10 Blackburn	29	42	+9	WLLLD	
11 West Ham	30	42	-4	WWLWD	
12 Leeds	29	38	-6	LLWLW	
13 Middlesbrough	30	33	-13	LLDLL	
14 Sheffield Wed	29	30	-10	WLLLL	
15 Coventry	29	27	-16	DWDDD	
16 Wimbledon	28	26	-16	WLLDD	
17 Manchester City	29	26	-22	WLLDL	
18 Southampton	28	25	-13	WDDLL	
19 QPR	30	22	-22	LWDL	
20 Bolton	29	19	-29	LLWLW	
Weekly change	Up	Stayed the same	Down		

Coventry can draw hope from Royle seal of approval

Everton 2
Coventry City 2

By PAT GIBSON

THERE was enough blood spilt at Goodison Park to dispel any suspicion that the old pal's act might have been at work as Coventry City recovered from a two-goal deficit to take a point which could be crucial in their annual battle to avoid relegation from the FA Carling Premiership.

Joe Royle and Ron Atkinson, the respective managers, are so close that they telephone each other several times a week to talk about how their teams are playing, but it is not that which makes Royle hope and believe that Coventry will stay in the top division for the thirtieth consecutive season.

"Our friendship has got nothing to do with it," Royle said. "I hope Coventry get out of trouble because they try to play and get forward, and I think they can because they score goals. That is the great thing. I know they leak goals as well, but, as long as you can score, you can always win a game. Looking at the teams around them, they seem to be struggling because they don't score enough."

This much proved his point. Most teams in Coventry's position would have thrown in the towel after they had conceded two goals in the opening 25 minutes to the rampant Ferguson, the first a classic header from Hinchcliffe's cross, the second a clever finish after Stuart's flick had sent him striding clear of the visitors' defence.

Coventry, however, pressed on in the belief that they could get back into the game and they were rewarded when a brave diving header by Whelan forced Southall into a magnificent save. Whelan suffered a gashed temple that needed six stitches, but, as he was led from the field, Daish headed in the resultant corner and Atkinson said: "All credit to the lad. As he went off, I shouted to him: 'Hey, you've just got us a goal through your bravery.'"

It was the turn of Short, Everton's central defender, to show his courage in the second half. He had to go to the touchline three times for treatment after sustaining a cut above his nose before the referee eventually decided he had seen enough blood for one day and ordered him off for good two minutes from the end, but it was all to no avail.

Coventry had already scored the equaliser they deserved when Williams's header went in off Short's shoulder, leaving Atkinson, as slipstream, as ever, to say: "We made it hard for ourselves but that's our game. We don't like anybody to leave until we've finished."

EVERTON (4-4-2): N. Southall — M. Hughes, G. Smith (sub: D. Connolly, 68min), D. Urwin, A. Hinchcliffe — A. Hinchcliffe, A. Grant, J. Parkinson (sub: D. Armstrong, 45), J. Edwards — D. Ferguson, G. Stuart.

COVENTRY CITY (4-4-2): S. Ogrincovic — B. Borrows, D. Bursall, L. Daish, R. Shaw — P. Taylor (sub: G. Smith, 68), P. Williams, E. Jansz, J. Salako — D. Dublin, N. Whelan (sub: P. Ndlovu, 42). Referee: P. Darson.

Villa reward blind loyalty of their immovable followers



Yorker: precise header

Aston Villa 4
Queens Park Rangers ... 2

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

ANOTHER frustrating afternoon for Reg Thacker, Aston Villa enthusiast since 1955, regular supporter for 20 years and current season-ticket holder. Reg Thacker, programme dealer, Reg Thacker, the man who never misses a match at Villa Park ... and never sees one.

Every football club, up and down the country, has a Reg Thacker. The ever-so eager, always-doing-his-bit loyalist

who, come rain or shine, is there in position. If it means sacrificing personal pleasure for the greater good, so be it.

When Villa are, more often than not, cashing in on the pitch, Thacker is cashing up at his Trinity Road kiosk. Apart from the occasional glimpse on a nearby television monitor, he has little but the cheers of the crowd to guide him.

"I do miss the football, especially this season," he said. "People at the game come and talk to me about it as though I've seen it myself. They don't realise I've seen nothing."

Thacker was better served

during his programmes and counting his pennies for most of the first half on Saturday, when Villa had their minds more on the forthcoming Coca-Cola Cup final with Leeds United than making progress in the FA Carling Premiership.

Against a Queens Park Rangers side plunging inexorably into the Endsligh Insurance League, the only saving grace was Milosevic's nineteenth-minute goal — his third in three matches. An exchange of passes with Yorke and a subtle toe-poke did the rest.

In the second half, Rangers

responded by equalising and then going ahead in the space of nine minutes. Dichio volleyed in from McGrath's sliced clearance and then Galen produced a similar finish after, Bosnich had beaten away Bardsley's drive.

"At half-time, I felt we had at least five or ten per cent more to offer," Brian Little, the Villa manager, said. "There was a little something somewhere, crying to come out, but it didn't emerge until they had scored."

Emerge it did. Villa's indifference suddenly transformed into urgency, with the overlapping Charlies supplying the

ammunition. Yorke's sublime overhead kick, followed by a precise header, jointly took his tally for the season to 22 and put Rangers in their place. Then Wright's shot, deflecting off Bardsley and Yates en route to goal, summed up their desperate predicament.

Ray Wilkins, the Rangers player-manager, again spoke of the defensive errors, individual mistakes and ill-fortune that had dogged his side all season. "You can get away with it in the lower divisions, but not in the Premiership. You get punished," he said.

As the last rites descend on Rangers, Villa look forward to

the Coca-Cola Cup final and an FA Cup quarter-final against Nottingham Forest at the City Ground on Wednesday. Should their cup runs end in tears, they will probably still qualify for Europe next season via a high finish in the Premiership. A rich reward, and programmes galore, for Reg Thacker.

ASTON VILLA (3-5-2): M. Bosnich — U. Eknig, P. McGrath, R. Scarnes — G. Charles, G. Southgate (sub: J. Joseph, 57min), M. Draper, A. Townsend (sub: G. Farrelly, 88), A. Wright — D. Yorke, S. Milosevic.

QUEENS PARK RANGERS (4-3-3): S. Somerville — D. Bardsley, K. Roache, S. Yates, R. Brown — S. Barker, H. Clapham (sub: G. Goodridge, 68min), I. Holloway — T. Sinclair, K. Gallen, D. Dichio. Referee: A. Wilson.

Promised land is in sight for team shaped in Reid's image

Sunderland 3
Derby County 0

By PETER BALL

THE North East's football fervour is proving infectious. Sunderland stated their claim for a place among the elite on Saturday when they inflicted a first league defeat for 20 years on Derby County, the leaders, to close the gap at the top of the Endsligh Insurance League first division to four points. Sunderland have two games in hand.

Roker Park celebrated raucously, Sunderland's biggest gate of the season witnessing a line start to what is a big week for the North East's "other" club. This morning, the club unveils its plans for a new stadium. Tomorrow evening, Sunderland use up one of those games in hand at Oldham, where a win would leave Derby's lead looking vulnerable — as Derby themselves did on Saturday.

"We looked very, very strong," Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, said afterwards. "Physically, we won wars all over the pitch, but, when we had time, we got it down and played."

Reid's influence in that was obvious. At a lower level, Sunderland are like the Everton team that shaped his philosophy, with the same

pattern based on sound defence and competitiveness as the key, but with an eagerness to play too.

On Saturday, the defence was excellent, so that Shay Given, the promising young goalkeeper on loan from Blackburn Rovers, did not have a save to make until the dying moments. Ord, in particular, was outstanding, holding Gabbiadini and Sturridge at bay and still finding time to hit the pass of the match and

Full results and league tables ... Page 26

to win the header that set up Russell's second and Sunderland's third goal, which ended any chance of a Derby comeback.

Scott, whose overlap provided a goal for Agnew, and the wide players also did well, but the key was in front of Ord and Melville, where Bracewell and Ball went on their search-and-destroy missions enthusiastically, harrying Derby into submission, like Bracewell and Reid of ten years ago.

Here, though, is the rub — Bracewell's days as a Premiership player are past and, for all his commitment, Ball is likely to struggle at the higher level.

From Sunderland to New-

castle is only 12 miles by road; in football terms, the Tynesiders are a million miles away — or at least £20 million.

With the Premiership title in view, Kevin Keegan spent £11 million bringing in Asprilla and Batty to shore things up. Reid has had to be content with Paul Stewart on a free transfer, even if he did do well enough yesterday until he ran out of breath in his original role as a forward. Reid's capacity to make successful teams out of limited material deserves to be legendary — witness his stewardship of Manchester City — but reaching the Premiership would be the start of his and Sunderland's problems.

At least they are on course. Are Derby? "We knew the run would end sometime, it was just a pity it was to Sunderland," Jim Smith, the Derby manager, said afterwards. "But we've ten games left, we'll just have to set off on another run." Easier said than done, as Smith knows, and West Bromwich Albion, Leicester City, Millwall and Charlton Athletic, among others, could all tell him.

SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): S. Given — D. Kuteba, A. Melville, R. Ord, M. Scott — S. Agnew, P. Brown, K. Ball, M. Gray (sub: G. Hill, 89min) — C. Russell, P. Stewart (sub: P. Gray, 64).

DERBY COUNTY (3-5-2): R. Hout — D. Yates (sub: M. Carberry, 81), I. Storer, G. Rowell — L. Carley, P. Simpson (sub: G. Hodges, 45), R. van der Laan (sub: S. Flynn, 45), D. Powell, C. Powell — M. Gabbiadini, D. Sturridge. Referee: R. Pootman.

Edwards shows Luton virtues of simplicity

Huddersfield Town 1
Luton Town 0

By IVO TENNAANT

A YEAR after gaining promotion to the Endsligh Insurance League first division, Huddersfield Town are on the verge of attaining a dizzy level still. How Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, in his lifetime their most prominent supporter, would have been taken by such heightened ambitions and the splendour of their award-winning stadium.

Whether Huddersfield have a team fit to compete in the FA Carling Premiership is another matter. They created no shortage of chances with which to beat their more lowly opponents without matching them for dexterity, one-touch passing, Luton Town's game, the legacy of the management of David Pleat, may be better suited to the highest domestic level.

There is a muscularity about Huddersfield's football that reflects their manager's style as a player. Brian Horton's best years were spent captaining Luton under Pleat, counter-pointing from midfield the more intricate skills of the likes of Paul Walsh, Ricky Hill and David Moss, who is now the coach at Huddersfield.

This is not to say that Horton does not appreciate

abilities he did not possess. Indeed, he reminisced about the flair of Moss when discussing the winning goal, scored by a forward who, the previous Saturday, had claimed a hat-trick for Crewe Alexandra, his club since he left school. Rob Edwards, who cost Horton £150,000, now has 22 goals to his name this season.

He is 26, which would suggest he is set in his ways and might take some time adapting to a higher division, yet this goal, scored with just 15 minutes remaining, was no fluke. Controlling Jepson's cross as the ball dropped over his shoulder, Edwards turned and found the far corner in the next instant.

Contrast that decisiveness with the over-elaboration of Edwards's opposite number, Guentchev, who played for Bulgaria in the last World Cup. Sent clear early in the second half, he carried the ball to one side of Francis, Huddersfield's goalkeeper, but rather than trusting himself to shoot, instead vainly attempted a back heel into the path of a colleague. Luton are a team much in need of a goalscorer such as Edwards.

LUFTON TOWN (4-3-3): S. Francis — S. Jenkins, L. Skirrow, K. Gray, J. Cowan — D. Buttz, L. Miel, B. Thornley — R. Edwards, A. Booth, R. Jepson.

LUFTON TOWN (4-3-3): S. Francis — S. Jenkins, L. Skirrow, K. Gray, J. Cowan — D. Buttz, L. Miel, B. Thornley — R. Edwards, A. Booth, R. Jepson.

Freedman takes the honours in Palace's unheralded rise

Until their 5-0 win against Grimsby Town last Tuesday, Crystal Palace had risen largely without trace. A repeat of that scoreline never looked likely at Selhurst Park on Saturday, but a narrow victory over West Bromwich Albion kept the home team in a play-off position in the Endsligh Insurance League first division.

The possibility of an instant return to the Premiership for Palace would have seemed widely improbable a few weeks ago. However, the improbable is a speciality of Dave Bassett, whose appointment as manager has coincided with a significant improvement in the team's previously disappointing home form. A side minus most of last season's big names, wading through a congested fixture list on a heavily over-used pitch? No problem, surely, for the man who took Wimbledon into the old first division.

"In four weeks, we've played eight games," Bassett said, "but I can't complain. You hope things go well, but I'm delighted. I felt the Palace team had something about them and I'm glad I've been able to contribute. The players and the back-room staff have responded — if they'd wanted to be negative, it would have made things very difficult."

The something Palace had

Nick Szczepanik on

how a team's cause

was promoted in a 1-0

win at Selhurst Park

on Saturday, and the main difference between two lacklustre outings, was the former

Barnet forward, Doug Freedman. While Taylor and Hunt waited in vain for service from the West Bromwich

midfield, Freedman was happy to do his own foraging when necessary and, in possession, had the confidence

and imagination to start and finish attacks.

"He's got a bit of the unexpected about him," his manager said. "He does a lot

of good work around the halfway line and up to the penalty area. I've been on to him about getting in the box to score more goals."

He clearly did not need

telling twice. After a midweek hat-trick, Freedman was on target again in 29 minutes:

when Andersen headed on a free kick, Freedman stole the

yard he needed on his marker to time a crisp volley past

Naylor in the visiting team's goal. He also initiated the best

moment of the second half when his flick released

Hopkin, who gave Dyer the chance for a shot well saved by

Naylor.

The goalkeeper was only

playing because Spink had

damaged an ankle in the pre-match warm-up. "We should have known then it wasn't our day," the West Bromwich

manager, Alan Buckley, said. "You need a break, and we didn't get it."

Palace play at home again tomorrow. "We could do with a rest — and so could the pitch," Bassett said. With Wimbledon going to another

FA Cup replay, there is not much chance of that.

CRYSTAL PALACE (4-4-2): S. Martin — G. Davies, D. Tuttle, D. Roberts, L. Anderson — M. Edwards, A. Pocher, R. Houghton, D. Gordon — D. Hopkin, D. Freedman, G. Nash (sub: B. Dwyer, 73).

WEST BROMWICH ALBION (4-4-2): S. Naylor — P. Holmes, D. Burgess (sub: D. Smith, 89), P. Houn, S. Nicholson, K. Donovan, I. Hamilton, J. Dwyer (sub: P. Mardon, 88), D. Gillett (sub: S. Colclough, 83). Referee: A. D'Urso.

CRYSTAL PALACE (4-4-2): S. Martin — G. Davies, D. Tuttle, D. Roberts, L. Anderson — M. Edwards, A. Pocher, R. Houghton, D. Gordon — D. Hopkin, D. Freedman, G. Nash (sub: B. Dwyer, 73).

CRYSTAL PALACE (4-4-2): S. Martin — G. Davies, D. Tuttle, D. Roberts, L. Anderson — M. Edwards, A. Pocher, R. Houghton, D. Gordon — D. Hopkin, D. Freedman, G. Nash (sub: B. Dwyer, 73).

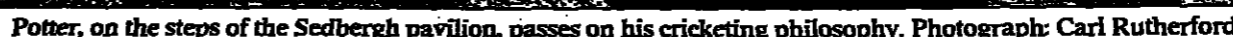
FROM DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT
IN STOCKHOLM

Britain won four medals, three on the last day, in

Agyepong jumped 16.93 metres, four centimetres behind Maris Bruziks, of Latvia, to take his first international championship medal. Aged 30, Agyepong has more than once appeared in the food and drink section of *The Times*. He is now a chef at Christopher's in the West End, but it was while he was at Smith's, south London, that *The Times* critic said he had "an original touch and a measure of inspiration". His triple jump yesterday was in the class of his mutton brock, which, apparently, is excellent.

SPORT IN SCHOOLS

Hebbs, Jack, were to thank you, Jack," and I remember thinking: "This one's a conman." He asked if I minded if he smoked. I said I did. But we went down to the nets and I told him to show me what he could do. Well, the first ball came down and it bounced and turned. I could hear it "fizzing." Warne, though, was



By the end of the summer, it will be a surprise if a few Victorian vowels have not infiltrated the public school accents and a few typically aggressive Aussie attitudes diluted the doctrine of the MCC coaching manual. Potter arrived barely a week ago, with his wife Lorraine, but he

Neither party in this unlikely deal can quite believe their luck. Potter, because he has landed in a rural Cumbrian idyll with real enthusiasm around him; Sedbergh, because one of the world's most authoritative cricket coaches has brought fresh impetus to the school's quest for all-round sporting excellence. Sedbergh boasts more than 30 rugby internationals, includ-

Considering that two months ago, Potter was vainly searching maps of England trying to find signs of Sedbergh (he still pronounces it like Edberg), his arrival shows the speed with which an idle conversation at a centenary dinner turned to reality. Potter said he was interested in coaching in England, contact was made with the Headmasters' Conference Schools (HMC) and David Walsh, chairman of HMC cricket, knew Sedbergh were

Potter's one previous visit to England was on Australia's 1964 tour, when he scored 741 runs without playing a Test. He never did play Test cricket, but his influence has been far more fundamental.

At the age of 57, hair greying, spirit still sharp as the Cumbrian wind, Potter is more than willing to share his wealth of experience with anyone prepared to listen. The boys will be entranced. By July, they will be able to spot Warner's flipper a mile away.

BY NORMAN DE MESQUITA

in the games that were played, Sheffield Steelers were beaten by Basingstoke Bison, Nottingham Panthers narrowly beat Hife Flyers and the victorious Cardiff Devils' goal-tender, Stevie Lyle, held Newcastle Warriors scoreless.

In the promotion-relegation play-offs, Milton Keynes Kings and Slough Jets, the bottom two clubs in the premier division, easily beat Guildford Flames and Dummies Border Vikings of the first division, and there were wins for Manchester Storm and Bracknell Bees.

Results, page 30

Yeovil Town	1
St Albans City	1

Having recovered their Vauxhall Conference place after three years in the Isthmian League in 1988, sold the Huish and its famed slope to Tesco and moved to the standard-setting Huish Park in 1990, all should have been set fair yet the enthusiasm overreached the budget to the tune of £900,000 and instead condemned Yeovil to a succession of precarious seasons in the Conference before being relegated to the Isthmian League last season. "It's been a case of the bank manager saying 'I will have that, the football

Instead, Yeovil, caught out by a 35-yard free kick by Allan Cockram, the St Albans player-manager, on the stroke of half-time, had to work their way back into the match.

YEAVOL TOWN (4-3-3): A Pennock — L. Francis, R Nugent, G Roberts, M Engwell — S Browne, C Seymour (sub: B Graybrooke, 77mm), G Kemp — M St Hilaire, D Birkby, L White (sub: C Dillon, 87)

ST ALBANS CITY (4-1-4-1-1): G Howells — A Polston, S Webster, K Mudd, M Howard — J Daly — R Blake (sub: B Blackman, 67mm), M Baggins (sub: M Gurney, 74), A Cockburn, R Peters — S Clark.

Referee: K Torrance.

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

Southgate came from behind twice to share four goals at home with East Grinstead in a match full of speed and commitment. Griffiths put East Grinstead in front from Head's pass in the 23rd minute, Southgate responding two minutes later with Kerry scoring on the rebound from their first short corner of the day.

Dominic Maguire, of Brooklands, was taken to hospital with an eye injury after being struck by the ball in the 67th minute in the second division match against Olton and West Warwickshire. Brooklands emerged with a 2-1 victory.

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FACTFILE

1989: Bill Bradburn on A-List, Wiltshire
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1984: Captains England at 19-group
level
January: Wins first England cap after
defeat by France. November: Becomes
youngest English captain in 57 years
after leading England to victory over
Australia
1991: Leads England to first grand slam
in 11 years in March, followed by defeat
by Australia in the final at Twickenham
in November
1992: Awarded OBE in New Year
honours
1993: Captains England to second
grand slam
1995: Makes British Isles debut in first
test against New Zealand
1996: Captains England for inter-
national appearances, as captain with
his 37th against Scotland at Murrayfield
1997: Captains England, against
Romania
1998: Captains England to third grand
slam
1999: Captains England in television
criticism of RFU committee in day
programme, but reinstated two days
later
2000: Captains England to fourth place in
World Cup in South Africa
2008: Announces decision to relinquish
captaincy

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John Goodbody on Steve Coppel, football player-turned-long-distance runner

Marathon man's long road from Manchester United



Steve Coppel, second from left, training alongside Beverley Nicholas, the Arsenal representative, and Eamonn Martin, the winner of the 1993 London Marathon

Steve Coppel has a vendetta against long-distance running. Eight months after he retired as a professional footballer in 1984, after a career which included 42 England caps, he ran a half-marathon in Cheshire. He did not train and his injured left knee, which had ended his playing career, could well have buckled underneath him.

He recalls that, at ten miles, he "hit the wall" and could scarcely put one foot in front of another. "The crowd really tried to help. You do not want them to see you in that condition." He finished, however, in 1hr 45min and an ambition was born. "Since then, I have always wanted to get my own back on the marathon," he says.

On April 21, Coppel, a former Manchester United player, will be given his chance when he runs in the Flora London Marathon. He will be representing both the charity Sport Aiding Medical Research for Kids (SPARKS) and Crystal Palace, where he works as director of football.

Runners from about 100 professional clubs, wearing their own club strip, are

among the record number of 39,000 competitors who have been accepted for the event. Prizes will be given to the first club runner from each league to finish and also to the entrant who raises the most amount of money for their charity.

The football players themselves will not be competing. Running a marathon is scarcely the best preparation for the climax of the season, when teams will be husbanding their reserves for games, which will determine promotion and relegation. So the responsibility lies with non-playing staff and even the team supporters.

Coppel is still suffering from an arthritic knee and has difficulty in the stopping and turning, accelerating and checking, which form so much of the game. Steady-state running is less awkward and,



Pounding the grass: Coppel and Martin

days. He always runs on grass — a wise precaution given the state of his knee — usually round Richmond Park or Woodcote Park golf club. "Richmond Park is lovely. A lap is about eight miles. Before the marathon, I hope to do three laps. Every run is different. Sometimes an hour will breeze by. Frequently, I will work out in my mind lists of things to do."

"The challenge of the marathon is enormous, although it is a one-off for me. Footballers are now better athletes than they were and their

preparation is more of a science, but the performance of long-distance runners still impresses me."

Coppel says that, without any conscious effort, he is now craving healthier foods rather than "garbage". "When you are preparing for a marathon, you do think a bit more. I have always been renowned for buying fish and chips." He believes in listening to his body and adjusts his training accordingly, but he still writes down what he is planning to do. He is hoping to complete the race in under four hours "unless my knee blows up".

If Coppel is coaching himself, Arsenal have the advantage of receiving advice from Mel Batty, the former ten-mile world record-holder and the man who guided Eamonn Martin to his victory in the 1993 London Marathon. Batty, an avid Arsenal supporter, and Alan Sefton, the club's sports development officer for the local community, have launched a joint effort to get the best from their representative, Beverley Nicholas.

A former sprinter at Leyton Manor School, she is training three times a week: a two-hour steady run with Sefton round the parks near Highbury and two shorter sessions.

Nicholas, 26, an aerobics teacher and administrator at Arsenal's sports centre, says: "I am enjoying the running, despite the recent cold." Her coaches seem to have been reluctant to depress her buoyant spirits. "I have not yet been told what the most difficult thing is about the marathon."

The event seems to be attracting former professional players who have retired through injury problems. Shaun Gore, 27, the former Fulham and Halifax player, will be representing Chelsea for whom he works as a community officer. He and his two assistants, Michael Cole and Christopher Harris, will be raising money for the British Diabetic Association. Shaun's sister, Jenny, suffers from diabetes.

Shaun says: "When we decided in November that we would try the marathon, we decided we would do it for a charity. It gives us incentive. If we can raise £1,000, we will go

SPORT FOR ALL

to Ken Bates or Matthew Harding to see if they can match it." The trio train separately, although there is a great deal of banter each morning between them when they review the previous night's training.

Gore, at 6ft 4in, is robustly built, but he has a damaged anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee, so he has to be careful not to strain his leg with the pounding on the streets. His injury caused him to retire from professional football five years ago.

"I have not found too much difficulty with sore knees. It is more the boredom on the long runs," he says. He also has difficulty fitting the sessions into his work schedule, in which he organises coaching courses and community work for the club. "However, I feel drained if I have not been for a run."

It is this hunger to train that participants in the event should also feel as they prepare for April 21.

Soling crew get wind of medal with Italian win

Edward Gorman, sailing correspondent, on a British trio with high Olympic hopes

Britain's Olympic Soling team of Andy Beadsworth, Barry Parkin and Adrian Stead gave their medal prospects at the Games in the United States this summer a considerable boost with a convincing win at the Italian pre-Olympic regatta at Allassio over the weekend.

The team, led by Beadsworth, the three-times national match-racing champion, produced a dazzling start to record three wins in a row. They took a premature start in the fourth race, but finished with two fourths and two seventh places to clinch overall victory.

Although this was a relatively small fleet of 28 boats, it included five former world champions, among them Jochem Schumann, of Germany, who finished second, and Jesper Bank, of Denmark, the 1992 Olympic champion, who was third.

Also in the fleet were the brothers Luis and Manuel Doreste, of Spain, a country using the regatta as its Olympic selection trial, Marc Bouet, the leading French yachtsman, and the best teams from Eastern Europe, who will race against Beadsworth in the European Olympic qualifier in San Remo in a month.

Despite his proven record, especially as a match racer, Beadsworth is still relatively inexperienced in the Solings. At the Miami Olympic classes in January, he was twelfth overall in a competitive fleet, but seemed to lack confidence.

Eddie Warden Owen, who coaches the trio, identified at that time not only the confidence issue but also problems with changing gear, especially on the first beat, to make the best of wind shifts or changes in wind strength.

Warden Owen was delighted with the performance at Allassio. "We talked about reacting quickly to difficult situations," he said yesterday. "They've identified that and worked on it. The good thing is that they are flexible in terms of what they want to achieve. Having got to know them

as a team, you can see there are a variety of influences there which, properly harnessed, will be very positive. It is not a skipper and a crew, but three guys contributing to make the boat go faster."

One significant change this week was the introduction of a stiffer mast. This helped in the fresh conditions at Allassio, though it can make rig-tuning more difficult in light airs. However, Beadsworth demonstrated his mastery of it by winning the only light-wind race of the week.

At the Olympics, the medals in the Soling class are decided by a series of match races between the leading six boats after the fleet racing has finished. Beadsworth has always looked a medal contender if he can produce the straight-line speed to get to the play-offs. He will need to reproduce this form to do that.

"We are improving all the time and have proved we can win races against good opposition," Parkin said, as they packed for Punta Ala, also in Italy, where the world championships take place in two weeks. The team will spend a week training in Italy before the championships and Warden Owen will again join them. They will also have Dave Curtis, of the United States, an experienced sailmaker, with them in the run-up to the championships.

Warden Owen will be emphasising the importance of confidence. "They were erratic in Miami because they were finding out their position in the fleet," Warden Owen said. "Every day I was saying: 'Just get your confidence up and sail'."

Samantha Brewster, who is attempting to become the first woman to circumnavigate the world solo against the prevailing winds and currents, is having difficulties with the generator on board *Heath Insured*. The 6ft cutter's fuel consumption has increased to the point where Brewster, at present in the Southern Ocean, could run out before her voyage is complete.

'The fleet included five former world champions'

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT
There were two points in the play on this hand.

Dealer West	North-South game	Total points scoring
♠ K864 ♥ 983 ♦ A84 ♣ A62	♠ K864 ♥ 983 ♦ A84 ♣ A62	♠ 32 ♥ 103 ♦ 103 ♣ 1084

W	N	E	S
2S (1) Pass	Pass 4H	Pass All Pass	3H

Contract: Four Hearts by South
(1) Weak: 6-10, six card suit.
What should declarer do on the club lead? As the cards lie it is best to take the first round with the ace, and after drawing two rounds of trumps lead up to the king of spades. As West only has one club, declarer is able to get a club away on the king of spades.

In practice my partner, Steve Lodge, played low on the club. I think that is correct — the clubs are more likely to be 5-2 than 6-1. However, here that enabled East to win and give his partner a club ruff. After ruffing the club West continued with ace and queen of spades. Declarer won in dummy, discarding a diamond, and played the nine of hearts. East of course should duck this, and if he does declarer is in an awkward quandary as to whether to play East for the remaining three trumps. However, East put in the queen of hearts and now when West showed out

the trump position became clear.

When you have a trump holding like East's, you should not cover a high card led from dummy unless you know you can promote your spot card. A more difficult form is when dummy has 107xx. East has QJ8, and declarer AK9xxx. If declarer intends to play trumps from the top, it does no harm to lead the ten from dummy — an unwary East may cover.

For details of *The Times* Midland Private Banking National Bridge challenge, contact the event organisers on 0181-942 9506 or write to: Britannic Building, Beverley Way, New Malden, Surrey, KT3 4PH or fax to: 0181-942 9569.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORDWATCHING

By Philip Howard

RASORIAL
a. Sharp
b. Scratching
c. Inquisitive

CADUCITY
a. Drooping
b. Coddishness
c. Betrayal

Answers on page 37

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Sudden death
Alexander Alekhine, who died 50 years ago this year, is the hero and role model for world champion Garry Kasparov. Kasparov has written that he was fascinated by Alekhine's games because "his attacks erupted like thunderstorms from a clear sky".

In the early 1930s Alekhine secured a sensational series of tournament victories, sometimes outdistancing his rivals by colossal margins. Such events included the tournaments at San Remo 1930, Bled 1931, London and Berne 1932 and Zurich 1934. In the last named of these Alekhine dealt a sudden death blow involving a spectacular queen sacrifice to one of his predecessors as world champion, the great master Emanuel Lasker.

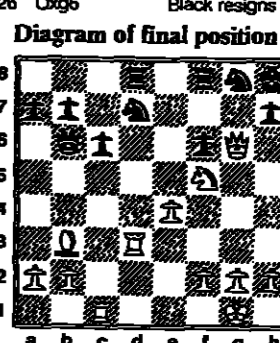
White: Alexander Alekhine
Black: Emanuel Lasker
Zurich 1934

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4	d5
2 c4	e6
3 Nc3	Nf6
4 Nf3	Be7
5 Bg5	Nbd7
6 e3	O-O
7 Rc1	Qc7
8 Bc4	Qxc4
9 Bxc4	Nd5
10 Bxe7	Cxe7
11 Ne4	Nf6
12 Ng3	Qd6
13 Qd3	Qd6
14 Nf5	Qd6
15 Nxd4	Qd6
16 Bb3	Qd6
17 Nd5	Qd6
18 Qd6	Qd6
19 Rd1	Qd6
20 Qd6	Qd6
21 Qd6	Qd6

22 Nd6 Kg7
23 e4 Ng8
24 Rf3 f6
25 Nf5 Nf8
26 Qxg6 Black resigns

Diagram of final position



Victor Buerger

Another sad loss has struck the British chess community with the death of Victor Buerger, an international standard player, who had inflicted defeat on a number of world champions, and who had also shone as an organiser at top level international competitions. Mr Buerger, in his later years, was also a prominent member of the Roehampton Chess Club.

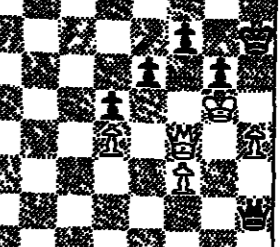
In 1927 he was the main fundraiser and organiser for the British Empire Chess Tournament which was held in London. Apart from competing himself, many of the top players of the day, such as Nimzowitsch, Vidmar and Bogolyubov, competed. Buerger himself won games, but not at this event, from the world champions Alexander Alekhine and Max Euwe.

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This position is from the game Matocchin — Kuzmin, USSR 1970. Black is a pawn ahead and could win easily enough by exchanging queens. However, he found a neat tactical sequence which resulted in a quicker win. Can you see it?



Solution on page 37

Safety test appropriate for prisoner's recall

Regina v Parole Board, Ex parte Watson

Before Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Rose and Lord Justice Roch

[Judgment March 4]

The public safety test prescribed by section 34(4)(b) of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and applied by the Parole Board in considering the initial release of a discretionary life sentence prisoner was equally appropriate where, under section 34(4), the board reviewed the case of such a prisoner who had been released on licence but recalled on its revocation.

The independence and objectivity of the board in the exercise of its review powers under section 34(4) was not compromised by the extra-statutory practice whereby the Home Secretary's recall of a prisoner was confirmed by the board pending review.

The Court of Appeal so held, dismissing an appeal by David Watson from Mr Justice Popplewell who had refused his application for judicial review of the Parole Board's decision, taken on the review of his case under section 34(4), not to recommend his release following his recall to prison.

In 1975 Watson had been convicted on a number of counts of burglary and indecent assault on schoolboys. He received a discretionary sentence of life imprisonment. In February 1993 he was released on licence, on terms that he be supervised by a probation officer.

Following his association with young men, and in particular a boy of 17 whose presence in his home he hid from the probation officer, he was initially warned about his future conduct and a further condition was attached to his licence.

However in March 1994, on the recommendation of the probation staff, his licence was revoked under section 34(2) of the 1991 Act and his recall to prison was considered and confirmed by the board.

In July 1994, following a full hearing on the board's review of his case under section 34(4) at which Watson was represented by counsel and substantial documentary material was placed before it, the board declined to direct his release on licence.

Mr Edward Fitzgerald, QC, for Watson; Mr Steven Kovats for the board.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS, referring to the 1991 Act and, in particular, to sections 34 and 39, said that the scheme of the provisions was clear: once a discretionary life sentence prisoner had served the penal or tariff term of his sentence he might require the secretary of state to refer his case to the board which, if satisfied that it was no longer necessary for the protection of the public that the prisoner should be confined, would direct his release, the secretary of state then being required to release him on licence: see section 34.

Recall might be effected either by recommendation of the board under section 39(1), or as in the present case, under the emergency procedure in section 34(2) whereby the secretary of state revoked his licence and recalled him without that recommendation if it was expedient in the public interest to do so, and impracticable to obtain a recommendation.

On the latter procedure the case had to be referred to the board, and where it directed immediate release on licence the secretary of state was obliged to give effect to that direction.

Since Watson was recalled under section 34(2) the secretary of state was under no statutory obligation to consult the board at that stage or before the case was referred to the board under section 34(4).

In practice after a section 34(2) recall the secretary of state did so, and if the board considered the recall unreasonable, would consider release.

The first challenge was to the lawfulness of the extra-statutory confirmation by the board in

March 1994. It was said that procedure: 1. Compromised the board's standing as a review body independent of the executive by involving it in the process of recall; 2. Denied him any right at that stage to a fair hearing and an opportunity to make representations; 3. Pre-empted or unfairly influenced the board's section 34(4) review, and 4. Gave rise to a real danger of bias: see *R v Gough* [1993] AC 646.

His Lordship rejected that challenge. The confirmation procedure adopted in the case was not objectionable. To condemn it could only work to the disadvantage of those recalled under section 34(2). It would not make sense to impose the requirements of a full hearing on a step which was clearly intended to be tentative and provisional.

While the procedure would be objectionable if there was reason to suppose that those conducting the later review would feel that they could not direct release on licence without appearing to disagree with the assessment of the board which had earlier confirmed the recall, there was no such reason.

No one who reached a decision on full argument and evidence following a hearing between the parties, assessed of error or implicitly criticised the maker of a preliminary decision taken on hearing one party alone.

The standing of those conducting the review under section 34(4) was sufficient guarantee of complete independence and objectivity. The earlier confirmation would be seen as part of the history but in itself of no weight. There was no danger of bias whatever.

His Lordship turned to the second issue: whether, as the board had considered, the same test was applicable on a review under section 34(4) as that applied on an initial consideration for release under section 34(4)(b).

Mr Fitzgerald had submitted that it was not, that once a prisoner had been released on licence he

was substantially at liberty. There was no longer a presumption in favour of continued imprisonment and ground had to be shown for depriving the former prisoner of the freedom he was held entitled to enjoy. Accordingly, the board should confine itself to determining the validity of the reasons given by the secretary of state for recall.

Alternatively, he submitted, the board should apply a different test: whether it was positively satisfied that recall was necessary to prevent the commission of, or further serious sexual assaults of the kind which had led to the original sentence.

His Lordship rejected those submissions. It would be a serious injustice if the review regime established by the Act if the board confined itself to reviewing the validity of the secretary of state's reasons for recall.

What mattered was the judgment of the board as to whether it was positively satisfied that recall was necessary to prevent the commission of, or further serious sexual assaults of the kind which had led to the original sentence.

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or not, the prisoner's release. In the absence of express statutory provision it was to be assumed that the same test was applicable.

4. In exercising its practical judgment, the board was bound to approach its task under the two sections in the same way, balancing the hardship and injustice of continuing to imprison a man unlikely to cause serious injury to the public against the need to protect the public against a man not unlikely to cause such injury.

That, in other than a clear case, was bound to be a difficult and delicate judgment. In the final balance the board was bound to give preponderant weight to the need to protect innocent members of the public against any significant risk of serious injury. That was the test which section 34(4)(b) prescribed and it was equally appropriate under section 34(4).

Had the board adopted a test more favourable to Watson, it appeared from its decision letter that it would nonetheless have held that test to be met on the present facts. But the board had applied the right test.

His Lordship, rejecting Mr Fitzgerald's challenge to the merits of the board's decision, referred to the factual material on which his submission was based, in particular, that Watson had committed no further sexual offences and broken no condition of his licence.

Those were fair points but they were matters for the board. It was not for the court to second guess the judgment of a specialist tribunal. It was evident from its letter that the board had reviewed the case fully.

There was material before it which could found a reasonable apprehension of serious injury to members of the public if Watson were released on licence at that time.

The judge reached the right answer for the right reasons.

Lord Justice Rose and Lord Justice Roch delivered concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Bimberg & Co; Treasury Solicitor.

Queen's Bench Divisional Court Criminal evidence rules apply to extradition

Regina v Governor of Brixton Prison and Another, Ex parte Levin

Before Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Morison

[Judgment March 1]

Extradition proceedings were criminal proceedings for the purposes of section 72 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and accordingly magistrates had a discretion to admit computer printouts under section 69 of that Act.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held in a reserved judgment delivered by Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Morison on September 20, 1995 by Mr R. Barrie, Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrate, to await a decision as to his extradition to the United States to stand trial on 66 charges, including theft, forgery, false accounting, unauthorised access to a computer and unauthorised modification of computer material.

The applicant, a Russian citizen, was alleged to have used his skill as a computer programmer, inter alia, to gain access to a US bank and divert funds into his own false accounts.

Section 69 of the 1984 Act provides: "(1) In any proceedings, a statement in a document produced by a computer shall not be admissible as evidence of any fact stated therein unless it is shown—(a) that there are no reasonable grounds for believing that the statement is inaccurate because of improper use of the computer; (b) that at all material times the computer was operating properly;..."

Section 72 provides: "(1) ... 'proceedings' means criminal proceedings..."

Mr R. Alan Jones, QC and Mr James Lewis for the applicant; Mr Paul Garlick for the governor and the US Government.

LORD JUSTICE BELDAM, giving the judgment of the court, said that the plaintiff had contended that records of the instructions and transfers contained in the computer printouts were hearsay and not admissible under section 69 of the 1984 Act because that did not apply to extradition proceedings.

He contended the court was bound by its own decision in *R v Governor of Brixton Prison and Another, Ex parte Francis* (The Times April 12, 1995; [1995] 1 WLR 1121) which had established that

extradition proceedings were criminal proceedings in which a magistrate could exercise his power under section 78 of the 1984 Act to exclude evidence.

In the view of their Lordships, if that decision was to be taken as having decided that the proceedings before the magistrate were not criminal proceedings it was wrong and should not be followed.

It was inconsistent with the opinion in *Amund v Home Secretary and Another* [1993] AC 147 which had approved the decision of the Court of Appeal in *Ex parte Woodhall* (1988) 20 QBD 332 which bound the divisional court.

Proceedings before the extraditing magistrate were properly classed as criminal having their birth or origin in acts or conduct punishable under the criminal law and were not in a separate class of their own.

Further, in so far as it had been suggested that Part VII of the 1984 Act did not apply to extradition proceedings, their Lordships adhered to the view expressed in *R v King's Lynn Magistrates Court, Ex parte Holland* [1993] 1 WLR 324, that the words "criminal proceedings" were used in section 72 and section 82 included extradition proceedings for the reasons given in that case.

The magistrate was to apply the provisions of the Act exercising his powers "as near as may be" as if he were hearing ordinary criminal proceedings: see paragraph 6(1) of Schedule 1 of the Extradition Act 1989.

The applicant further submitted that the magistrate should not have admitted the computer printouts of the bank's records because they were hearsay.

inter alia, as the computer had been improperly used by the applicant the requirements of section 69 had not been properly complied with.

In the Lordships' judgment, merely because there had been unauthorised use of the computer was not of itself a ground for believing that the statements recorded by it were inaccurate in the sense that the instruction had not been given.

It would have been absurd to hold that a computer printout could not be given in evidence to prove that an accused had obtained unauthorised access to the computer for the purposes of the crime. The requirements of section 69 had been complied with.

The next question was whether the evidence produced by the US government was sufficient accord-

ing to English law to justify the applicant's commitment for trial if the acts or omissions constituting the crime with which he was accused had been committed in England.

One of the offences with which the applicant had been charged was forgery and false accounting. The applicant argued that the offence could not be committed by entering a computer password and other information because that did not create an instrument, as required for the crime of forgery under section 1 of the Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981, within the meaning of section 31(1)(d) of the 1981 Act.

The records contained in the computer were stored in magnetic disk media and in their Lordships' view that disk was within the definition of "instrument".

Had the applicant made a false disk? A disk embraced the information stored as well as the medium on which it was stored just as a document comprised both the words on the paper and the paper itself. Thus by entering false instructions on to the disk it was falsified.

It was also argued by the applicant that even if the instrument amounted to a forgery it had been made in Russia. Rejecting that submission, their Lordships said that the applicant's keyboard had been connected electronically with the bank's computer in the US; as the applicant pressed the keys his actions, as he intended, recorded or stored information for all computer purposes simultaneously on the magnetic disk of the computer. That was where the instrument was created and where the act constituting the offence was done.

On the charges of theft, their Lordships continued that in the case of a virtually instantaneous instruction intended to take effect where the computer was situated, it seemed artificial to regard the insertion of an instruction on to the disk as having been done only at the remote place where the keyboard was situated.

The fact that the applicant was physically in Russia was of far less significance than the fact that he was looking at and operating on magnetic disks located in the US.

Accordingly, the magistrate had been right to commit the applicant in custody and the application would be refused.

Solicitors: Reynolds Dawson; Crown Prosecution Service, Headquarters.

minutes before the accident occurred and that the accident had arisen as a result of her decision as a pedestrian to run across the road. The use of her vehicle could not be altered because of her particular motive in crossing the road.

His Lordship was unable to accept that Mrs Bentley's reason for being in the road when she came into collision with the plaintiff's car was irrelevant and should be disregarded. The reason why she was crossing the road was one of the factors which had to be considered when determining whether the accident arose out of the use of her car.

How the activity of crossing the road was to be categorised and whether it could be said to arise out of some other activity had to be judged objectively according to the circumstances of the case. To exclude consideration of the pedestrian's purpose would be an unwarranted disregard of common sense.

The question whether the accident arose out of the use of Mrs Bentley's vehicle was essentially one of fact and the judge had been entitled to reach the decision that he did.

Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Hutchison gave concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Becheroff Stanleys; Butcher Andrews, Fakenham.

Error in extension of time

Lewis v Harewood

Before Lord Justice Waite and Lord Justice Morison

[Judgment February 23]

A judge erred in granting a plaintiff a retrospective extension of time for service of a summons, inter alia, in failing to apply the principle that the discretion must be sparingly exercised in order to ensure compliance with time limits that were advisedly given a short duration in the interests of ensuring a speedy dispatch of litigation.

The Court of Appeal so stated in allowing an appeal by Mr Andrew Harewood against an order of Judge Neville, in Exeter County Court on June 21, 1995 confirming, on appeal, the consecutive orders of two district judges who had granted the plaintiff, Mrs Claire Lewis, a retrospective extension of time for the service of a summons in a personal injury action.

Mr William Coley for the appellant defendant; Mr Martin Edmunds for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE WAITE said that it was common ground that Order 7, rule 20 of the County Court Rules 1981 corresponded closely with Order 6, rule 8 of the Rules of the Supreme Court and that both rules were governed by the principles laid down in *Kleinwort Benson Ltd v Barbakid Ltd* [1987] AC 597.

Those provided that where the extension application was made when the time allowed for service and the primary limitation period had both expired the plaintiff must:

1 Show good reason for the grant of an extension for service of his process;

2 Provide a satisfactory explanation for his failure to apply for an extension before the validity period for service of the process had expired; and

3 Satisfy the court that the circumstances of the case, when considered as a whole with regard to the balance of prejudice or hardship as between both parties, required its discretion to be exercised in favour of an extension.

A difference of opinion had arisen as to the extent to which it was proper to take the third principle into account when considering the first and second.

For the defendant, it had been submitted that the first and second had to be decided first before any question of discretion could arise. For the plaintiff it had been contended that matters of discretion fell to be considered at every stage.

The effect of guidance given by Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, in *Hardy v Lesham* [1993] 1 WLR 754 and *Barr v Barr* [1994] PIQR 451 made it clear that

both submissions adopted too extreme a stance. The law lay somewhere between them and could be summarised as follows: the judge exercising the discretion to extend time in such circumstances had to conduct the inquiry in two stages.

He must first be satisfied, at stage one, that there was good reason to extend time, and also that the plaintiff had given a satisfactory explanation for his failure to apply before the validity period for service of the process had expired.

If he was satisfied then he must go on, at stage two, to a general exercise of a discretion involving a consideration of all the circumstances including the balance of prejudice or hardship.

Matters relevant at stage two were not, however, irrelevant at stage one. There was a degree of overlap and a judge addressing the inquiry at stage one was entitled and bound to take into account any matters which appeared to him to be relevant to the issues of good reason and satisfactory explanation, notwithstanding that the same matters would also be relevant, assuming it arose at all, to the exercise of his discretion at stage two.

Lord Justice Morison agreed. Solicitors: Veitch Penny, Exeter; Mr A. Grayson, Exeter.

Section 54(1) of the 1979 Act, now section 7(1) of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, provides: "On the occasion when a person becomes absolutely entitled to any settled property as against the trustee all the assets forming part of the settled property to which he becomes entitled shall be deemed to have been disposed of by the trustee... for a consideration equal to their market value."

Mr Robert Ham, QC, for the trustee; Mr Michael Furness for the Crown.

MR JUSTICE BLACKBURN said that from 1963 the trustee had held shares in Liberty & Co for the children of Mr Stewart-Liberty "now living or hereafter to be born... as shall attain the age of 21 years and if more than one in equal shares". In 1964, as a result of an accident, Mr Stewart-Liberty was paralysed from the chest down and thereafter had no realistic prospect of fathering further children. He died in July 1990.

The question was whether Mr Stewart-Liberty's four children, who all attained the age of 21 years, became absolutely entitled as against the trustee on the occasion of the death of their father or on some earlier date.

Mr Ham argued that as from the time the father became incapable of begetting children, the class of children taking under the settlement closed. His object in so arguing was not to avoid tax but to minimise the amount of notional gain brought into charge prior to an actual disposal of the settled property.

The proposition advanced for the Crown was that in ascertaining the beneficial entitlements of beneficiaries under a trust instrument, and, in particular, the date or dates on which those entitlements become indefeasible, the court would have regard to the impossibility of a given individual having children and would ascertain those entitlements on the footing that every individual remained capable of having a child until the end of his life.

However, evidence of incapacity might be admitted, Mr Furness said, if it was relevant and admissible to show what the testator or settlor meant by particular words or phrases used in the instrument.

It was common ground that there was a rule against admitting evidence of a person's incapacity to have children applicable to the operation of the rules against perpetuities and excessive accumulations: see *For v Austin* [1787] 1 Cox 324 and *In re Dawson*

Presumption of fertility

Figg v Clark (Inspector of Taxes)

Before Mr Justice Blackburne

[Judgment February 14]

In ascertaining the entitlement of beneficiaries under a trust, regard could not be had to a living person's incapacity to have children and the court would ascertain entitlement on the footing that an individual remained capable of having a child until the time of his or her death.

For the purposes of section 54 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979 four children born to a father who later suffered serious injuries in a hunting accident resulting in his being incapable of fathering further children became absolutely entitled to trust assets at the time of their father's death and not from the time of his accident.

MR JUSTICE BLACKBURNE so held in the Chancery Division dismissing an appeal by Sir Leonard Figg, the sole trustee of a 1963 settlement of shares in Liberty & Co made for the benefit of the late Mr Arthur Stewart-Liberty and his family, from a decision of the Chancery Division upholding in principle an estimated assessment to capital gains tax for 1990-91 in the sum of £1,450,000.

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(1888) 39 ChD 153. But Mr Ham said that that principle was restricted to those matters and that outside of them the court had admitted evidence of incapacity in deciding the rights of beneficiaries.

He referred to *In re Lowman* [1895] 2 Ch 348. However, the court was bound by the Court of Appeal decision in *In re Hocking* [1898] 2 Ch 567 and by *In re Dawson* and *In re Deloitte* [1928] Ch 56 to accept the Crown's submission.

In re Lowman was not a case where the court had admitted evidence of incapacity in order to determine beneficial rights but was one of the court exercising its administrative jurisdiction.

The course so attractively argued by Mr Ham could not be adopted. In particular, it was important not to confuse the rule against admitting evidence of incapacity in order to prove a beneficiary's entitlement with the question of the court's administrative jurisdiction.

Moreover, if Mr Ham was correct then, as soon as a relevant individual became infertile, trustees would become nominees of the trust fund for the class in question. And that would happen even if nobody realised the situation at the time.

Further, section 54(1) of the 1979 Act would become virtually unworkable in many cases: requiring investigations into the precise date on which a person ceased to be capable of producing children. In the event, however, Mr Stewart-Liberty's children only became absolutely entitled as against the trustee on his death in July 1990.

Solicitors: Cameron Markby Hewitt; Solicitor, Inland Revenue.

Accident through use of vehicle

Dunthorne v Bentley and Others

Before Lord Justice Rose, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Hutchison

[Judgment February 26]

A judge was entitled to conclude that an accident caused by a person negligently running across a road arose out of that person's use of her motor vehicle which she had earlier parked at the side of the road.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing an appeal by the second defendants, Cornhill Insurance plc, against the decision of Mr Justice Laws in the Queen's Bench Division on September 4, 1994 that the three liable for injuries caused to the plaintiff, Mr Mark Dunthorne.

The car that the plaintiff was driving had struck Mrs Bentley when she ran across the road into his path. Mrs Bentley was fatally injured and the plaintiff suffered serious head injuries.

The plaintiff claimed damages against the first defendants, Donald Bentley and David Hume, the administrators of Mrs Bentley's estate, who admitted negligence, and against Mrs Bentley's insurance company on the ground that, as the accident arose out of the use of Mrs Bentley's vehicle, they were liable under the terms of her motor insurance policy.

Mr Dermot O'Brien, QC and Mr Bradley Martin for the insurance company; Mr Guy Sankey, QC, for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE ROSE said that Mrs Bentley had been driving her car when she ran out of control. She had parked her car with the hazard lights flashing and stood at the rear of the car. After about 10 minutes, she had been seen by a colleague who stopped her car on the opposite side of the road. Mrs Bentley had run across the road and the accident had occurred.

The crucial question was whether the plaintiff's injuries were "caused by, or arising out of" the use of Mrs Bentley's car. If so, the insurance company under its policy, which precisely followed the words of section 145 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 requiring drivers to insure against liability to third parties, was obliged to satisfy the judgment obtained against Mrs Bentley's estate.

The judge had inferred from the facts that Mrs Bentley had been running across the road to obtain fuel, in particular to get petrol to restart her car, and he concluded that that was causal and causally connected with her use of her car and the resulting accident arose out of such use.

The insurance company argued that Mrs Bentley's car had been safely and properly parked 10

minutes before the accident occurred and that the accident had arisen as a result of her decision as a pedestrian to run across the road. The use of her vehicle could not be altered because of her particular motive in crossing the road.

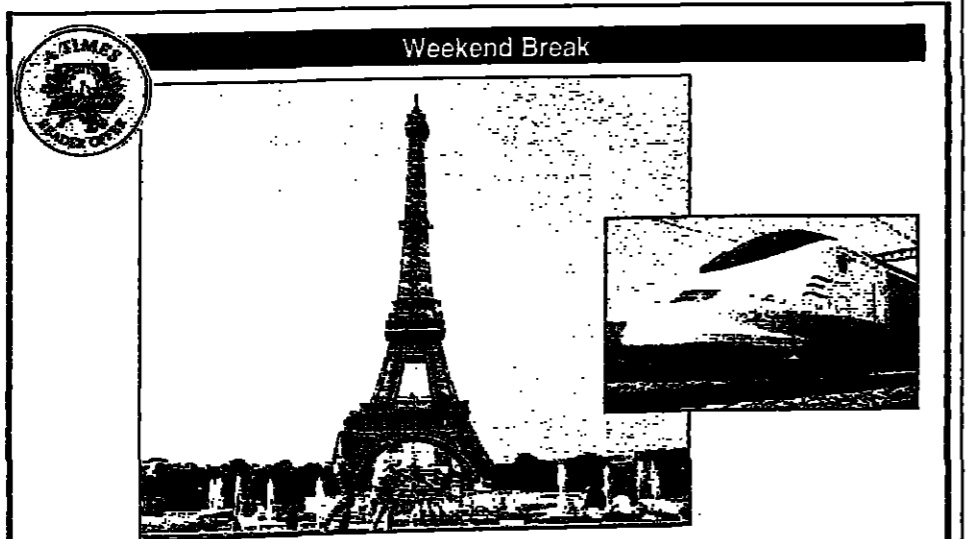
His Lordship was unable to accept that Mrs Bentley's reason for being in the road when she came into collision with the plaintiff's car was irrelevant and should be disregarded. The reason why she was crossing the road was one of the factors which had to be considered when determining whether the accident arose out of the use of her car.

How the activity of crossing the road was to be categorised and whether it could be said to arise out of some other activity had to be judged objectively according to the circumstances of the case. To exclude consideration of the pedestrian's purpose would be an unwarranted disregard of common sense.

The question whether the accident arose out of the use of Mrs Bentley's vehicle was essentially one of fact and the judge had been entitled to reach the decision that he did.

Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Hutchison gave concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Becheroff Stanleys; Butcher Andrews, Fakenham.



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RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY

Interims: Cortec International, DCS Group, Domestic & General, Kleinwort Benson, Development Fund, Redrow Group.

Finals: Automated Security (Holdings), British Vita, DRS Data & Research Services, Fairway Group, Forward Technology, Hibernian Group, Hecox Select Companies, Laporte, Lopex, Merchants Trust, Parco Group, Pentland Group, Persimmon, Refugia Group, Rotherford Group, RPS Group, Rugby Group, Spacex, Sparco Engineering, Suter, Economic statistics: Industrial production (January), producer prices (February).

TOMORROW

Interims: Everest Foods, Headway, M&G Recovery Investment Trust, Pochin's, Thorntons, Wolsley.

Finals: Boradin Holdings, Billam, Briton Group, Calderbury, Capital Corp, Christie International, C&G, Cordiant, Creatcare, Delta, Dunedin Income Growth, Expamet International, Fidelity Japanese Values, Holiday Chemical Holdings, Huntingdon International, Kalon Group, M&G Income Investment Trust, Parry, Prudential Corporation, Record Holdings, TJ Group, Williams Holdings, Yorkshire-Tyne Teas.

Economic statistics: New construction orders (January).

WEDNESDAY

Interims: Ricardo Group, Shire Pharmaceuticals, Thormorton Dual Trust, Zambie Copper Investments.

Finals: Charles Baynes, BPP Holdings, Brent International, Church & Co, English China Clays, Fleming Mercantile IT, Furlong Homes, Gwent Global Smaller Companies, Haden MacLellan, Heywood Williams Group, JIB Group, Lambert Howarth Group, Pacific Assets Trust, Radius, Reed Elsevier, Reed International, Rosebys, Schroders, Tibury Douglas, Waste Recycling.

Economic statistics: Unemployment (February), average earnings (January), unit labour costs (January), labour force survey (September-November).

THURSDAY

Interims: BZW Endowment Fund, F&C High Income IT, Logica, Sider, Television Corporation.

Finals: Anglo American Industrial Corp, Bioplace International, Boston, British Mohair Holdings, BTR, Coats Viyella, CU Environmental Trust, Davis Service Group, Emess, Exco, Jeyes Group, Legal & General, Mayflower Corp, Micro Focus Group, Mirror Group, Minorco, MTL Instruments, Pittard, Rackitt & Colman, Steel Bullion Jones, United Biscuits (Hidges), Watmoughs (Holdings), Arthur Wood & Son.

FRIDAY

Interims: Walker (Thomas).

Finals: Aspen Communications, Baring Chrysler, British Data Management, Clarendon Garments, Fisher (James) & Sons, Gander Holdings, Johnson Group Cleaners, Molins, Mowlem (John), Perry Group, Serif, Wembley.

COMPANIES

PHILIP PANGALOS

BTR focus on long-term strategy

BTR: The spotlight at the diversified industrial conglomerate will be on Ian Strachan, BTR's new chief executive, who joined from RTZ and took the helm from Alan Jackson in January. Analysts will look to Mr Strachan to provide some insight into BTR's long-term strategic issues.

BTR is likely to have witnessed a mixed trading picture. The group will have had a tough time in markets, including automotive, construction and chemicals, but should have seen an improvement in some of its industrial manufacturing and mid-cycle engineering operations. Andrew Hollins, of Kleinwort Benson, has pencilled in "clean" full-year, pre-tax profits, due on Thursday, of £1.38 billion (£1.3 billion). Kleinwort expects headline pre-tax profits, after exceptional disposal gains, to rise to £1.54 billion (£1.41 billion), with a final dividend of 8.7p (8.3p) predicted. Market forecasts range from £1.38 billion to £1.6 billion.

TI GROUP: A stronger performance from the Dowty aerospace business should help TI, the specialist engineering group, to another solid set of results when it reports tomorrow. Sandy Morris at NatWest Securities has pencilled in final pre-tax profits of £180 million (£147.8 million), with a dividend of 13p (12p) predicted. Market forecasts range from £175 million to £188 million.

The advance should be driven by solid performances from the John Crane division, which makes engineered seals; Bundy, which makes narrow-gauge tubing for brake, fuel and refrigeration systems; and Dowty, which specialises in aircraft landing gear. Dowty aerospace profits are expected to rise to £39 million (£30.2 million). Analysts also await news on possible deals.

COATS VIYELLA: Britain's biggest textiles firm is expected to reveal a decline in Thursday's full-year results as consumers shunned the high streets last year when the economy was sluggish and the weather exceptionally warm. After a profits warning in December, market estimates for full-year pre-tax profits range



Ian Strachan will be in the spotlight on Thursday as successor to Alan Jackson as BTR's head

between £142.5 million and £147.5 million, compared with £152.4 million previously. Attention will focus on current trading and prospects. Analysts are hopeful that the current year will see an upturn as prices for cotton and many man-made fibres have begun to ease, while consumer spending seems to be picking up.

PRUDENTIAL: Britain's biggest institutional investor is expected tomorrow to report final pre-tax profits of £765 million (£693 million), according to UBS, with a dividend of 15.5 (14.4p)

predicted. Market forecasts range from £740 million to £800 million. UBS says that life business remains tough, in both Britain and America, while Prudential's new venture into mortgages looks "more challenging every day".

WILLIAMS HOLDINGS: Progress from the fire-protection and security division should offset tough conditions at Williams's building products division, with demand for housing remaining depressed in Europe and the United States. BZW expects the

international manufacturing group to report a rise in final pre-tax profits, due tomorrow, to £225.3 million (£200.3 million), with a dividend of 14.5p (13.5p) predicted. Market forecasts range from £220 million to £230 million, including an exceptional gain of about £9 million from the flotation of Cortworth.

LEGAL & GENERAL: The composite insurer rounds off the reporting season with its results on Thursday. Bad-weather and subsidence claims could push UK underwriting into the red, but

this will be offset by gains in investment activity. UBS expects UK life insurance profits to be £115 million, while pre-tax profits are forecast to climb to £252 million (£165 million), with a dividend of 25p (21.7p) predicted. Market forecasts range from £232 million to £275 million.

REED INTERNATIONAL: Continued margin improvement should help the media group report steady growth in earnings on Wednesday, with final pre-tax profits expected to advance by 14 per cent to £374 million, according to UBS. A dividend of 23.5p (21.5p) is predicted. The results for 1995 will include a maiden full-year contribution from Lexis Nexis, the academic publishing business acquired at the end of 1994. Reed Elsevier, the group's Anglo-Dutch parent, is forecast to report an increase in full-year profits to £715 million (£606 million), according to Panmure Gordon. Market forecasts for Reed Elsevier range from £705 million to £716 million.

UNITED BISCUITS: The McVitie's to KP snacks food group is expected to disappoint investors on Thursday with drastically reduced annual profits, hit by a combination of rising costs and the effects of last year's £320 million disposal of Keebler, the US biscuit manufacturer. Analysts expect pre-tax profits before exceptional items to slump to between £51 million and £90 million, compared with £169 million last time. The disposal of Keebler may push United into the red. UBS forecasts a pre-tax loss of £40.5 million. The dividend is predicted to be cut to 8p (15.3p).

CORDIANT: The effects of a traumatic year for Cordiant, the advertising agency formerly known as Saatchi & Saatchi, will become apparent when it reports tomorrow. Panmure Gordon expects the group to slide to a loss after the impact of severance costs associated with the departure of key executives. Panmure expects operating profits of about £5.4 million, though attention will focus on any comments about new client accounts.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

All eyes are on America

AFTER Friday's shock news of a 705,000 jump in US non-farm payrolls in February, the biggest monthly rise for 12 years and twice as big as any Wall Street economist had expected, the financial markets will be particularly sensitive to American economic statistics out this week.

These include February producer prices and consumer prices, and economists will be looking to see whether inflationary trends, which have been particularly benign during the recovery, have remained so. These figures are key background to the March 26 meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee, which will discuss interest rate policy.

Industrial production figures for February are due on Friday and are expected to show a very small bounce back after January's sharp, weather-related fall. However, the jobs figures may mean that there is a bigger rebound. On Thursday, initial weekly unemployment claims for early March are released. These figures will be closely examined for any evidence that February's non-farm payrolls may have been erratic.

In Britain, this week's statistics are expected to provide further justification for Friday's quarter-point cut in base rates. Today, industrial production figures are released for January and are expected to show a very small rise in manufacturing output. Today also sees publication of producer prices data for February, which are expected to show that raw materials prices are continuing to fall.

On Wednesday, labour market data are expected to show that annual growth in average earnings remained unchanged at 3.25 per cent in January, and another fall in headline unemployment in February.

The other main focus of attention is Thursday's meeting of the Bundesbank's policy-making council. Speculation of lower German rates is rife, given the recent poor data on unemployment and GDP, which fell 0.5 per cent in the fourth quarter. This was the first quarterly fall for three years.

JANET BUSH

SUNDAY TIPS

The Sunday Times: Buy TI Group, Mayflower, Celsis, Sell Rexam, Rugby. **The Sunday Telegraph:** Buy Wyko, Pentland, Birse Group, Inspec. **Independent on Sunday:** Buy Henlys, Perkins Foods, Sell Hay & Robertson. **The Observer:** Buy Capital Radio, Sell Cadbury Schweppes. **The Mail on Sunday:** Buy Platinium, Mosaic, Sell Memory Corporation.

STARTING TODAY, THE TIMES IS OFFERING THREE CLASSICAL CDS PERFORMED BY THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Key into Baroque and classical

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The confident elegance of the buildings and landscapes of the period found a true reflection in the music of the time. Haydn, a key figure of the classical period, helped to refine the musical forms so they could then be further improved by Mozart, his younger contemporary. He brought new depths of musical characterisation and emotion that have never been surpassed and rarely equalled.

Beethoven was a transitional figure whose music, while broadly classical, would usher in the Romantic age.



Beethoven's "Eroica" is featured on our first CD

Their music typifies the brilliance and transparency achieved by the complex, decorated vocal or solo instrumental line, soaring above the simple but firm accompaniment (see right for details of *Baroque and Classical* recording track listings).



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The Baroque and Classical track listing

1. VIVALDI
The Four Seasons: 1. La Primavera (5:21)
2. PACHELBEL
Canon (5:34)
3. BACH
Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 Allegro (5:47)
4. HAYDN
Symphony No. 103: Drum Roll, 1st movt adagio-allegro con spirito (10:00)
5. MOZART
Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major (7:05)
6. BEETHOVEN
Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major Eroica 1st movt: allegro con brio (14:45)
7. MOZART
Violin Concerto No. 5: Turkish (9:41)

The CD has a total playing time of 57:46

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Japanese lenders quit struggling Eurotunnel

By Jonathan Pryn, Transport Correspondent

EUROTUNNEL'S Japanese banks, the biggest single lending group in the company's £8 billion loan syndicate, have begun off-loading Eurotunnel debt at a knock-down price in advance of March 31 year ends.

Two tranches of debt nominally worth a total of up to £100 million were sold by smaller Japanese banks last week and a third, far larger, slice, with a face value described as substantially above £100 million, is on offer.

The loans are changing

hands at between 31p and 33p in the pound, making Eurotunnel debt, which is not currently paying interest, among the most "distressed" in the secondary debt market.

The Japanese sales will send a shiver through Eurotunnel's Canary Wharf head office because the 35 Japanese banks in the 225-bank syndicate make up its largest single lending group, accounting for about a quarter of the borrowings.

The sales suggest that confidence in Eurotunnel's future among the Japanese banks is ebbing away, making it potentially more difficult to secure a financial restructuring deal.

However, the banks that have sold out represent only a tiny proportion of the total outstanding debt and the major Japanese "city" banks have yet to make a move. Japanese banking experts said that they would wait until the new financial year because they had already suffered huge write-offs from their domestic loan books this year.

Many have made 30 to 35 per cent provisions for Eurotunnel debt and may use the year end to raise these to 70 per cent, bringing their book value in line with market value.

Specialists in the distressed debt market pointed out that loans issued by Brent Walker and Queens Moat Houses, two other companies struggling under mountains of debt built up in the 1980s and early 1990s, are traded at up to 80p in the pound. The closest comparison is with the non-performing debt owed by some African and South American countries, they said.

Eurotunnel is waiting to put forward its restructuring plans while two mediators appointed by a French court, Lord Wakeham and Robert Badinter, a former French Justice Minister, conclude their talks with banks and shareholders.

They are expected to report in early summer on whether there is any possibility of a compromise between Eurotunnel and its banks. Without agreement, Eurotunnel faces a bleak future beyond March of next year, when its interest standstill agreement expires. The company needs the consent of banks representing two thirds of the value of the loans to extend the standstill.

Failing that, Eurotunnel will quickly be in default of loan agreements because its revenues still barely cover operating costs and capital expenditure. It would then be technically insolvent.

Rolls to strike deal with rival

By Ross Tremain, Industrial Correspondent

ROLLS-ROYCE will today announce a collaboration agreement with General Electric of America to develop jointly an engine to power an Anglo-American strike aircraft that will replace the Harrier jump-jet and F16 Eagle.

Under a far-reaching collaboration deal, Rolls will share 30 per cent of the work on the F120 engine. It is the first military engine collaboration between the British company and its US arch-rival. The engine is one of two being developed to power the joint advanced strike technology (JAST) aircraft.

McDonnell Douglas working with British Aerospace is offering a rival design powered by the F119 engine from Pratt & Whitney in which Rolls has a smaller interest. Boeing is also offering a design for the \$2 billion aircraft development programme. Britain's Ministry of Defence is contributing \$200 million to the development, winning a 10 per cent interest for British companies in the aircraft, which is expected to replace the Royal Navy's Sea Harriers.

After buying US engine maker Allison last year, Rolls found itself teamed with GE in developing the main engine for the Lockheed Martin design and the lift engine, intended to enable short take-off and vertical landing.



Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber is expected to take a quarter share in the development project

Lloyd Webber in power station talks

By Carl Mortished

SIR Andrew Lloyd Webber, the composer and theatre tycoon, is negotiating to acquire a substantial interest in Battersea Power Station.

His entertainment company, The Really Useful Group, is in talks with the Hwang brothers who own the derelict south London landmark and have plans for a £200 million redevelopment of the site as a leisure and shopping complex.

Sir Andrew, the composer of *Cats*, is expected to take a quarter share in the project alongside the Hwangs, Gordon Group, the American developer, and BAA, the airports group.

BAA has invested heavily in transforming its airports into successful shopping malls and

has recently linked up with McArthur Glen to develop factory outlet shopping.

Last month, BAA emerged as a partner with the Hwangs on a feasibility study to redevelop the power station site.

The Hwangs, who are based in Hong Kong, took control of Battersea Power Station three years ago from John Broome, the leisure developer.

Plans to transform the listed art deco building into an entertainment complex were thwarted by the property sector collapse and recession.

The new owners have plans for a 37-screen multiplex cinema, a theatre and shopping complex with a rail link to Victoria and Clapham Junction.

Change tack to win projects, says E&Y

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

ATTEMPTS to attract inward investment projects to different parts of England suffer from over-competition and an often wasted use of resources, a study of efforts to attract foreign companies to Britain shows today.

Ministers will claim today, in speeches to a cross-industry conference on small business, that the Government's economic policies are establishing Britain as the enterprise centre of Europe.

But in a study of the performance of local authorities in England in attracting inward investment, Ernst & Young, the firm of accountants, suggests that effort and resources are being wasted. The study says: "Better co-ordination and less

This is the end game for cutting interest

GILT-EDGED

Last Friday's 25bp cut in base rates, the third in four months, has brought short-term interest rates down from a peak of 6.75 per cent at the time of last November's Budget to 6 per cent. The authorities have had no difficulty in justifying these cuts. Recent economic data, supported by business surveys, have shown stagnation in manufacturing output, and continued below-trend growth in GDP, as companies have sought to reverse an undesired increase in stocks.

The economy has now grown at a below-trend rate in every quarter since the beginning of 1995. This has contributed to a sharp drop in producer output price inflation and a stable rate of increase in underlying retail prices and average earnings.

Since these conditions will probably persist for several more months, the Chancellor of the Exchequer may feel inclined to keep interest rates on a downward path.

However, we are now in the end game as far as interest rate cuts are concerned. Although there is no near-term threat to the inflation outlook, a number of forward-looking indicators of inflation are beginning to flash amber once again.

The most striking of these has been the acceleration in broad money growth. Annual M4 growth has doubled over the past year, to 10.7 per cent in January. Even allowing for known special factors, M4 growth is comfortably above the Government's 3 to 9 per cent monitoring range. Given the unpredictable

relationship between M4 and inflation, it is understandable that the authorities have been inclined to play down the significance of the rise in the legitimate, provided other leading indicators of inflation remain benign. Throughout much of 1995, this was the case, but the situation is now less clear.

For instance, there has been a renewed pick-up in narrow money growth, another useful leading indicator of inflation. Notes and coin increased by 0.9 per cent between January and February, taking the annual growth rate up from 5.7 per cent to 6.4 per cent. Coupled with upbeat responses from retailers in

mortgage commitments and this is beginning to be reflected in mortgage lending and, importantly, in housing turnover. With mortgage rates at their lowest for almost 30 years, the housing market seems set to strengthen further.

None of these factors pose any immediate threat to the Government's inflation target. The Bank of England is right to believe that the odds favour a decline in underlying inflation to below the Government's target ceiling of 2.5 per cent over the next year. However, the prospects of keeping inflation below 2.5 per cent in the second half of 1997 and in 1998 are becoming less certain. This argues for caution from now on in monetary policy. Base rates could fall another 25bp between now and mid-year, but this is likely to be the last cut.

The problem for gilt market investors in coming months is that the Chancellor's judgment

With mortgage rates at their lowest for almost 30 years, the housing market seems set to strengthen further

the latest CBI Distributive Trades Survey, this indicates that the strong rebound in retail sales observed around the turn of the year has been maintained in February.

The housing market is showing much more widespread signs of recovery. According to the Halifax Building Society, house prices rose for the seventh successive month in February. Prices have risen at an annual rate of 4.4 per cent over the past six months. The Nationwide house price index shows an annualised increase of 4 per cent over the same period. Activity in the housing market is also on the up. There has recently been a strong rise

ment between now and the general election may be influenced as much by political considerations as economic ones. With an election due by May 1997, there is clearly a risk that the Chancellor will give too much weight to prospective inflation developments over the next 12 to 14 months and not enough to developments beyond then. This could easily become the source of renewed disagreement over policy with the Bank. In this environment, a sustained drop in gilt yields from current levels is unlikely.

DAVID WALTON
Goldman Sachs International

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.09	1.93
Austria Sch	16.92	15.42
Belgium Fr	49.51	45.21
Canada \$	2.206	2.046
Cyprus Cyp£	0.752	0.697
Denmark Kr	6.36	5.95
Finland Mk	7.60	6.95
France Fr	6.16	7.51
Germany Dm	2.42	2.21
Greece Dr	360.00	365.00
Hong Kong \$	12.47	11.47
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel Shk	5.1300	4.4800
Italy Lira	2493.00	2338.00
Japan Yen	175.50	169.50
Malta	0.592	0.537
Netherlands Gld	2.687	2.457
New Zealand \$	2.41	2.19
Norway Kr	10.43	9.83
Portugal Esc	246.00	227.50
S Africa Rd	6.55	5.75
Spain Pta	197.50	184.50
Sweden Kr	11.01	10.21
Switzerland Fr	1.97	1.79
Turkey Lira	107.45	99.745.0
USA \$	1.627	1.487

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Friday.

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar 1.5255 (-0.0027)
German mark 2.2634 (+0.0076)
Exchange index 83.7 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2760.0 (-15.5)
FT-SE 100 3710.3 (-42.4)
New York Dow Jones 5470.45 (-66.10)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 20155.87 (-12.76)

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TES
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TUC resumes pension fight

By Robert Miller

THE TUC will today resume its legal campaign to secure backdated pension rights on behalf of 60,000 part-time workers when it takes the case before the Employment Appeal Tribunal.

The TUC suffered a setback in December when an industrial tribunal ruled that backdated compensation claims should be limited to just two years. If the TUC is successful, the part-timers could win £95 million in compensation.

John Cavanagh, the TUC's leading counsel, will argue

that employers should pay-up in full for past sex discrimination and will ask for the cases to be referred to the European Court of Justice.

John Monks, TUC secretary general, said: "Many people find the idea that a UK court could absolve employers from responsibility for past discrimination hard to swallow. Part-timers need the same financial security in old age as full-timers. The TUC will be asking the Appeal Tribunal to refer these cases to Europe."



Monks: legal campaign

GRANADA IS MOVING

From 11 March 1996, the headquarters of Granada Group PLC will be at:

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reduced by 0.25% to 6.00% p.a.

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Mortgage war hits bank costs

A leading US credit rating agency predicts that bank costs are rising again as the five largest UK clearers battle with building societies for mortgage market share.

In a survey of the 1995 record £10.6 billion pre-tax profits of the big five — HSBC, owners of the Midland, National Westminster, Barclays, Lloyds TSB and Abbey Life, Fitch, the credit rating agency, gives warning today that "short-term manoeuvring among the competitors fighting for market share means less profit volatility for some but agonising decisions for others".

Fitch says it welcome further rationalisation within the sector. The agency adds: "A strong interest by all the major players in the personal sector will result in more acquisitions of asset managers, insurance companies and building societies."

Baltic order

British Steel has won its first order in Lithuania with a contract for 14,000 tonnes of rail track for construction of a standard-gauge line to link it with Western European systems. George Thompson, British Steel's track products European sales manager, hopes the order, which took two years to win, will lead to more BS sales in Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.

Fokker freed

Fokker Aviation, the core of the collapsed Dutch plane-maker, has been released from court protection from creditors as the prelude to relaunching it as a stand-alone company or selling it to an overseas buyer. Final talks are underway with Samsung Aerospace of Korea and China Aviation Industries. A rescue would protect 1,500 jobs at Short Brothers in Belfast, which builds wings for Fokker. Temporary funding from the Dutch Government expires on Friday.

Rating cut

Moody's credit agency, has cut its rating on Southern Electric bonds due in 2002 from Aa3 to Aa1, and is continuing the review for a possible further downgrade. The move reflects growing competition in energy markets and less predictable regulation.

Opec fears resumption of exports will hit already over-stretched quotas

Iraqi oil could be back on sale soon

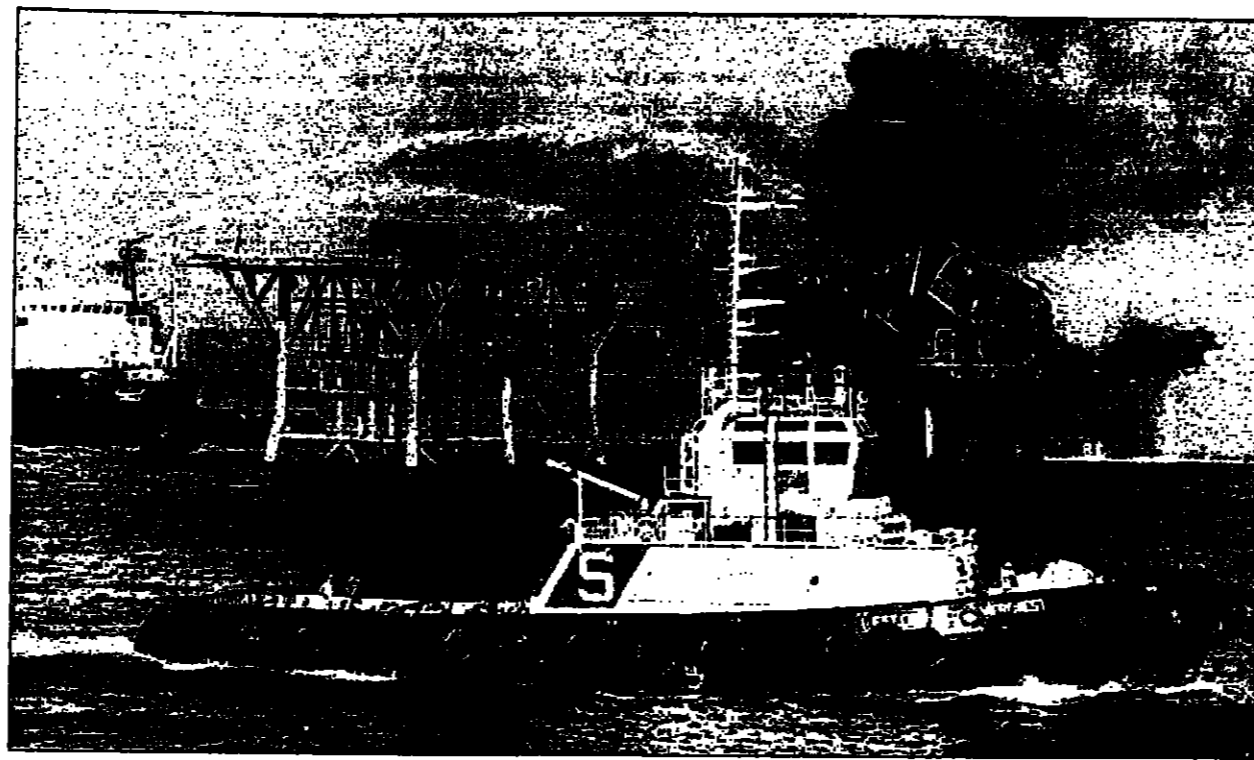
By CARL MORTSHED

OIL traders will be on tenterhooks today as talks open at the United Nations that could lead to the export of \$2 billion of Iraqi crude into a jittery market.

Diplomats are increasingly confident that the first significant exports of Iraqi oil since the Gulf War could commence in a couple of months, with the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 986. The proposal would not lift sanctions but would allow the controlled sale of oil in exchange for food and medicine at the rate of \$1 billion per quarter, renewable every six months.

At current oil prices, that would mean an extra 700,000 barrels per day added to world oil supplies at a time when Opec member states are already quarrelling about overproduction. The oil producers' cartel is already exceeding its target output of 24.5 million bpd by about 1.5 million barrels and the addition of Iraqi crude without restraint from other producers could send the price tumbling.

According to Leo Drollas, of the Centre for Global Energy Studies, Opec members are resigned to the Iraqi oil coming on to the market and have said that an emergency Opec meeting will be convened if



Diplomats are confident that the first significant exports of Iraqi oil since the Gulf War could start in a few months

terms are agreed between the UN and Iraq.

Pressure is mounting on Iraq to co-operate from several quarters, including Russia, as a significant part of the funds from oil exports, about \$300 million, will be earmarked for war reparations to Kuwait

while Russia is owed billions by Saddam Hussein's regime. The UN, itself under huge financial pressure because of late contributions from member states, hopes to recoup some of its Iraqi monitoring expenses from the oil sales.

Opec members are in dis-

agreement over who should cut back production when the Iraqi oil hits the market. Venezuela is blamed for much of the current overproduction but fingers will be pointed at Saudi Arabia too. Prior to the Kuwaiti invasion, Iraq was producing some three million

bpd. The Saudis quickly increased production to their current quota level of eight million bpd. "The only way they will agree is when prices start diving," said Mr Drollas. Opec's existing quota for Iraq of 400,000 bpd is known to be well under the country's

current production of about 500,000 barrels, consumed internally with small exports to Jordan in exchange for food. However, the country has huge untapped oil reserves including the seven billion to ten billion barrel Majnoon field. "In terms of oil prospectivity, Iraq is second only to Saudi Arabia. It is fairly unexplored," Mr Drollas said.

The wild card in the equation is President Hussein. Some analysts wonder whether he might refuse to agree with the UN. The deal has potential risks for President Hussein of more foreign control over the economy and UN officials monitoring food imports.

In spite of sanctions, Iraq has survived and managed to become self-sustaining and the Iraqi dictator has maintained some popular support. One analyst said: "What has been destroyed is the middle class. That has not been a bad thing for him as they were the opposition, university teachers, lawyers. He is not without support among the peasants."

The UN Resolution envisages oil exports via a dual pipeline to Turkey. Repairs would be needed to pumping stations damaged in the 1991 war. Iraq is believed to be arguing for exports by tanker from the Gulf, which would give them more control and not incur pipeline charges to Turkey.

Compensation fight nears end

By JON ASHWORTH

INVESTORS who saw £10 million in savings gambled away by a crooked accountant will learn today whether their High Court fight for compensation has proved successful.

A group of 120 investors is suing Clark Kenneth Leventhal (CKL) and two of its member firms, including Clark Whitehill, over the activities of Nicholas Young, who was jailed for four years in May 1991 after squandering millions on the races.

Judgment is expected this morning. The plaintiffs allege that CKL and Clark Whitehill were negligent in putting Young in a position of authority, where he was able to carry on his activities without ade-

quate supervision. The firms deny liability.

Young, the son of a chaplain to the Queen, was senior executive officer of CKL, an international association of accountancy firms. He allegedly told investors that CKL had arranged for him to have access to a special offshore investment account, which offered interest rates of up to 2 per cent per month. Interest on the funds would be tax-free.

Young, it is alleged, made full use of the CKL letterhead in his dealings with clients. Some 126 investors deposited millions of pounds with Young between 1977 and 1990. Far from investing it as promised, Young used the money in

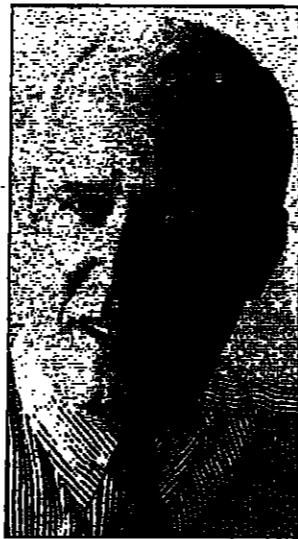
his efforts to create the "perfect" horse-racing gambling scheme. Over about 12 years, Young gambled some £11 million, won about £9 million and lost £2 million. His scheme collapsed after a cheque to an investor bounced.

The plaintiffs allege that the only persons who could provide proper supervision of Young's activities were the partners of Clark Whitehill, at whose offices he worked. It is alleged that they signally failed to monitor Young's activities, providing him with the means to defraud "a very large number of innocent people".

The case opened in the High Court on January 11.

BET's dividend rise defence

By SARAH BAGNALL



Clark: exciting future

BET yesterday forecast a surprise 27.5 per cent rise in its dividend in an attempt to fend off a £1.9 billion hostile takeover bid from Rentokil.

The 5.1p payout for the year to March 30 forms the central plank in the business services group's defence document, published yesterday, and is markedly higher than market forecasts. Analysts had pencilled in a dividend of about 4.5p although one stockbroker was predicting a payout of 4.9p.

Sir Christopher Harding, chairman at BET, said: "We believe the Rentokil offer is inadequate and does not recognise BET's current growth and future potential." John Clark, chief executive at BET,

believes that the company has an exciting future as an independent company with significant growth prospects. BET claims that Rentokil is attempting to use this growth to maintain its own 20 per cent growth targets at the expense of BET shareholders.

The document states: "Certain independent commentators are beginning to doubt Rentokil's ability to meet its 20 per cent annual growth target."

Clive Thompson, chief executive at Rentokil, was quick to respond saying "we are studying the BET defence document. I suppose in the same way as BET shareholders, in the search for new information. So far this is proving difficult."

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NatWest Business Accounts Interest Rates

National Westminster Bank announces the following interest rates, effective from 11 March 1996:

Solicitors' Reserve Account		
Gross Interest (per annum)	Balance	Gross Compound Annual Rate (%)
4.000%	Instant Access - No minimum deposit/withdrawal	4.06%
3.875%	£100,000 - £249,999	3.93%
3.500%	£25,000 - £99,999	3.55%
2.875%	£2,000 - £24,999	2.91%
2.000%	£500 - £1,999	2.02%
1.000%	£50 - £499	1.00%

† Where appropriate, Basic Rate Tax will be deducted from interest credited or paid (which may be reclaimed by resident non-taxpayers). Subject to the required registration form, interest will be paid gross.
‡ Gross Compound Annual Rate is the true annual return on your savings if the interest payments are retained in the account.

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Wobble fails to shake healthy market

THE market for smaller and growing companies took last Friday's stock market tumble in its stride. AIM's ability to cope with the wobble proves that underlying conditions remain healthy at a crucial time, with several companies planning to join the new market, while potential investors examine rollover tax relief possibilities.

New companies due to make their debut in the coming weeks include Cardcast, a credit card fraud detection company, and First Information

Group, an independent multimedia production company specialising in CD-ROMs for the consumer market.

David Abrahams, a dealer at Winterflood Securities, reported a considerable increase in interest in AIM stocks offering rollover tax relief. However, complex qualification rules mean that only a fraction of AIM-listed companies qualify for capital gains tax reinvestment and inheritance tax relief.

There was also renewed activity late last week from Independent Radio

Group (IRG), which made an agreed £4.54 million cash offer for Allied Radio. The bid is IRG's second deal since it was floated on AIM, having acquired a majority stake in Q96 FM, the West of Scotland broadcaster, in December.

The number of companies traded has grown to 130. Capitalisation increased to £2.61 billion, while total money raised stands at £174.4 million.

PHILIP PANGALOS

AIM (m)					FTSE 100 (m)				
Company	Price (pence)	Wtd %	YTD %	P/E	Company	Price (pence)	Wtd %	YTD %	P/E
15.80 AMCO Corp	111	-	5.1	12.2	43.10 Le Riches Shrs	260	...	7.4	25.5
2.08 Abacus Recruit	36	-	3	...	11.80 Llanrhonau Shrs	95	...	...	...
18.20 A de Gruy	130	+	5.4	10.8	26.80 Lon Fiduciary	24	...	...	...
12.50 African Gold	12	+	...	...	1.38 London Term	...	...	...	...
5.01 Albemarle & Bd	12	+	...	...	12.50 Lorien Sp	220	-	2.2	...
9.97 Alpha Omikron	19	-	...	...	11.80 Marx & O'see	20	-	2.0	27.1
38.30 Ann St Brewery	400	+	5.5	12.0	46.10 Megaloma	107	-	...	...
5.30 Ann St Cv Pl	895	-	8.9	...	16.70 Montcalm	97	...	...	...
75.30 Arion	8	-	...	...	5.57 Morkel	88	...	...	36.3
1.89 Arion Props	75	...	...	...	91.80 Memory Corp	155	-	70	...
11.40 Ask Central	71	...	...	...	8.04 Melodrama Films	21	-	...	...
1.10 Athlone Trust	61	+	3	...	16.70 Monroy	220	...	2.5	...
5.76 Ballymore	5	...	...	...	9.08 Mountcashell	...	...	...	...
5.13 Bards Hedges	20	+	...	...	20.80 MultiMedia	72	-	...	...
3.85 Belsam	43	...	...	...	25.10 MWF Sp	335	...	2.4	16.2
0.99 Bonness Leis	145	...	3.9	...	17.90 Nanning Home	210	...	2.9	...
11.50 Bow Lee Cv Pl	70	...	...	...	8.73 Neill Clerk	345	...	2.2	16.7
5.62 Brancote Hds	56	+	3	...	5.63 Neilston Cobbold	205	...	2.3	...
36.80 Broadbank	310	-	2.5	31.0	Monroy Ltd	73	...	...	...
0.94 CCI Hds	118	...	...	...	7.79 Nthm Petm Wts	68	...	...	...
0.13 CCI Founder Shs	110	...	...	...	0.13 Nthm Petm Wts	8	...	...	...
3.29 Calf Inns	115	...	2.2	9.5	17.90 Nthm Res Pys	63	-	1.3	38.4
6.25 Caledonian Tst	55	...	...	6.7	12.00 Old English Pub	98	+	2.2	14.1
1.55 Capital & Wtn	7	...	...	...	5.24 Omnicare	85	-	...	...
16.50 Card Chase	2	...	6.0	8.8	10.40 Omnicare	58	-	...	...
3.39 Cassidy Bros	62	...	...	...	16.20 Optical Care	15	...	...	...
1.79 Cavendish W F	41	...	20.8	...	18.70 Pacific Media	54	...	...	...
5.28 Celstratrad Ltd	18	...	...	...	21.00 Pan Andean Res	51	+	12	...
24.80 Celtic	9450	+	200	...	4.31 Park Est(Lv)	180	...	...	...
16.00 Celtic Pl Shs	9450	+	200	...	95.90 Pel City	395	+	20	...
1.57 Charwell Int'l	71	...	...	...	29.80 Polypharm Pharms	149	...	...	...
0.99 Chan Homes	110	...	...	...	3.62 Preston Nth E	400	...	...	...
13.10 ClubPartners	31	+	...	...	1.13 Revelation Piccadilly	105	...	...	...
12.20 Club de Pt Fin	510	...	...	...	10.60 Riceman Insee	16	...	...	...
8.75 Constar Tst	44	+	6	4.7	3.60 Rishmore Wynne	4	...	...	...
13.50 Country Gals	73	...	2.1	15.1	0.14 Rush Wtn Wts	15	...	...	...
2.68 Cynny Gals Pl	73	...	9.1	...	6.28 SCS Satellite	61	-	9	...
35.60 Cress Int'l	99	+	7	...	1.95 Sealswood Inds	28	...	4.5	...
15.90 Crown Products	80	...	...	...	Scott Pride	43	...	...	...
11.50 DCS Management	170	+	3	4.4	2.92 Self Sealing	30	...	5.1	13.0
14.00 DCS Management	170	+	3	4.4	59.90 SlayPharma B Wts	3	...	...	...
3.58 David Glass	66	...	5.5	9.4	1.00 SlayPharma B Wts	84	+	3.5	15.0
55.60 Dawson Hds	1215	-	10	3.7	135.10 Southern News	573	+	12	...
3.79 Dean Corp	63	-	...	...	79.00 Southern Vectis	58	...	...	...
11.80 Dendex	63	-	...	...	72.20 Surrey Fr Inns	170	+	5	15.0
77.40 Electrophonics Int'l	120	-	10	...	37.30 TRACER Netw	705	-	60	...
5.82 Euro Sales Fm	125	...	...	...	5.05 Tele Credit Eur	50	-	3	...
6.13 Fm Publs	260	+	40	...	Tele Credit Wts	35	-	...	...
20.00 Fm Publs	260	+	40	...	17.30 Told	105	...	...	...
5.25 Fm Publs	260	+	40	...	Trinity Care	175	...	1.1	...
7.16 Floral St	308	+	20	0.4	215.40 Trocadero	51	...	...	...
17.70 Fomscan	168	+	10	1.5	7.71 Utd Auctions	433	-	10	12
53.20 Freepegs	14	-	1	...	13.10 Utd Auctions	705	+	20	13.8
4.80 Furlong Homes	96	...	...	...	35.10 Utd Auctions	705	+	20	22.0
26.00 Gander Hds	9	...	...	...	36.70 Versailles Sp	300	-	5	...
6.00 Greenhill	20	...	...	...	9.00 Viewson	270	+	20	...
32.40 Gulton	145	...	3.4	13.1	Voss	270	+	20	...
3.57 Harcom	35	-	1	...	Wedderburn Sees	10	...	...	...
55.80 Hiscor Dead Ins	123	-	2	0.3	World Sees Wtns	4	...	...	...
10.70 Imp'd Radio	107	...	...	...	5.60 Western Salehm	18	...	...	...
14.20 Imp'd Radio	107	...	...	...	2.63 Westminster Eng	28	...	...	...
21.50 Int'l Greenings	513	...	1.2	...	6.64 Winchester M Mid	60	-	1	...
31.80 IOC Int'l	130	...	...	...	Wynndrop Props	140	-	5	...
3.87 Isarim	96	+	5	14.3	25.80 Zargo	280	...	...	...
19.50 Jamming Bros	30	+	10	2.8					
42.80 KS Biomed	113	...	...	...		
24.90 Lancashire Enterprises	138	-	4	...					
14.80 Lawrence	243	...	0.8	...					
53.70 Lawrie Group	2750	...	3.2	14.0					

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 32

RASORIAL

(b) Constantly scratching around in search of food, like a fowl or a teenage son. Pronounced more or less in the same way as *rasorial* (laughter-provoking) and *rasorial* (rodeolike, growling). "I am sorry if I sometimes seem ambivalent in my attitude to your mother, Dahlia. It's just that I find it very hard to make up my mind whether I see her as essentially rasorial, rasorial, or rasorial."

CADUCITY

(a) The dropping or shedding of a disposable part of an animal or plant when its function has been performed and it is no longer needed. Hence, fleetness, perishableness, or impermanence. Hence, senility, proximity to dissolution. "Oh, all right then, Aunt Margaret. I will go to Holy Trinity, but only out of respect for your caducity."

GIMMAGES

(c) Chains used in hanging criminals. "Yes, James, your new gold chain does show off your hairy tanned chest very nicely — but somehow I feel you would look even more handsome in gimmages."

SUPEREROGATION

(c) Superfluous. Something more than is asked for, over and above what is needed. Works of supererogation are good deeds over and above the call of duty. "Indeed, Una, the midwife who brought you into this wicked world performed a work of supererogation."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. e4 e5 2. Kf4 Kf5 3. Kf4 Kf5 4. Kf4 Kf5 5. dxe5 Qd2 mate.

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FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-92.0. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 94.0-94.5. LW 155. MW 150. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 155 (12.45-5.59am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 95.8; MW 1297, 1215. TALK RADIO UK. MW 1053, 1089. *Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Gillian Moxey, Rosemary Smith and Susan Thompson.*

Casting that does violence to credibility

The idea of nice Kevin Whately beating up his wife in the garage was always a little bit off. Whately is Lewis; he is Jack; he has sticky-out ears and a funny, puppet-style walk, as though perpetually stepping over his own feet. The message of Cunniff's Trip Trap (BBC1) was clear: that the hell of domestic violence is hidden inside nice-seeming men.

But when Whately's promised gritty domestic violence finally occurred on Saturday night, it was rendered much more shocking by something else: that Whately's character, Ian, was not especially angry. One minute he was inspecting some wine, the next he was wordlessly (routinely) chucking his wife around, like a bored cat with a toy, while she gasped and doubled up. "Uncomfortable" is the word we employ on these occasions. Uncomfortable, it was.

But was it also unconvincing? In the end, regrettably, I thought so. Lucy Gannon had clearly researched the subject, and was commendably concerned to understand why a husband commits such violence, not just why a wife puts up with it. Kate (Stella Gonet) had a typical punchbag CV: insecure, anxious about inherited madness, in love with domestic peace. Ian was an over-the-top primary school head, who grimly gathered all control to himself, and then turned violent when he split some. Frustrated, he blamed Kate for everything. He even mentioned his "second-rate house", which was either a very unreasonable complaint (the house was ample and lovely), or else was a line in the script blithely sabotaged by the locations manager.

But I never believed that Kate was properly, psychologically enslaved to this relationship. Perhaps Stella Gonet just exhibits too

much self-confidence (after all, she ran the House of Eton). Abused women can't imagine flight or resistance, believing themselves helpless, stupid, incompetent. They keep the husband's secret willingly, being more ashamed of it than he is. Yet when Ian said, "You drive me to it, every bloody time," and "Why do we do this to each other?", Gonet just looked thoughtful, compliant, and a bit mousy. The title came from "Billy Goat Gruff", in which little goat escapes "trip trap, trip trap" across the bridge. In the end, despite good dramatic complications, Kate's trip-trapped pretty easily too. Perhaps it should have been a series.

Giving Ian the surname "Armstrong" may have been a bit loaded, but there you are. Strong-arm tactics were his regular recourse, and he was not alone this weekend. Last

REVIEW



Lynne Truss

night we had not only Clive Anderson coping with official bullies in Lagos (*Our Man in...* BBC2) but also a powerful and affecting dramatisation, *Witness Against Hitler* (BBC1), with James Wilby as a real-life, saintly German anti-Nazi, charged with treason. Anderson survived his encounters with the regime. Wilby's man did not. Both brought legal cleverness to bear, thinking to outwit the big

bad troll and cross the bridge. Both need not have bothered.

Witness Against Hitler was an interesting film, rather long and leisurely and colourful (with good music), in which the viewer was encouraged not so much to empathise with Helmut James von Moltke as to fall in love with him. Opening scenes concerned his early blissful marriage to Freya (Helen McCrory); his estate in Prussia, yellow with sunlight and flowers like heaven. But dark clouds threatened von Moltke's conscience. As a Christian, he opposed the regime, and he gathered a circle of like-minded friends who spoke theatrically, with passion, composing a manifesto for post-Hitler, universal justice.

Jack Emery, who wrote and produced the film, is best known for his excellent monologues called *My Defence*, so I was rather wrong-footed by *Witness Against Hitler*. I expected Wilby finally to

take the stand and orate for half an hour, making his accusers bite their lips in shame. But of course this did not happen, and the strength of the film was not in oratory, but in its well judged touches of pure human feeling, and two very mature and affecting performances from Wilby and McCrory. The casting was superb.

As a light relief to all this, it was a great pleasure to see *Father Ted* back on Friday night (Channel 4). *Father Ted* is one of those rare comedies that can take an idea that looks funny on paper — two bored men on holiday in a caravan reduced to watching the kettle boil for entertainment — and make it funny on screen. "Will I put more water in and turn it on again Ted?" asks Dougal, brightly. They play hide-and-seek in the tiny caravan, and count to "... 98, 99, 100", when the only place to hide is with your head behind the cur-

tains. They visit St Kevin's Stump and stand looking at a sawn-off tree with their hands in their pockets. "Is this what all holidays are like then, Ted?" asks Dougal. Ted pauses for a minute. "Actually, yeah," he admits.

It was a packed and calamitous half-hour, as always. An angry naked man made several appearances, and Father Jack's wheelchair rolled uphill on "the magic road", so that with a final cry of "Reck!" he was catapulted over a cliff. Stupidity is not infallibly hilarious (look at *The Detectives*), but *Father Ted* is pleasantly, good-naturedly daft, and the performances are just outstanding. The utter cluelessness of Father Dougal (Ardal O'Hanlon) is transcendental. "For the last time," snaps Ted, showing Dougal two little models of sheep. "These are small, but the ones out there" (the indicators through the window) "are far away."

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (96091)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (27362)
9.00 Breakfast News Extra (27362) (960965)

9.20 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (2494091)
9.45 Killy (s) (821846)
10.30 Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) (84186)

12.00 News (Ceefax) and weather (2345411)
12.05 Turnabout (s) (576053)
12.30 Going for a Song (s) (90508)

1.00 One O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (97121)
1.30 Regional News and weather (80162643)
1.40 Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (94996169)

2.00 Pabbe Mill (s) (8674817)
2.40 Rich Man, Poor Man, With Peter Strauss and Nick Nolte (138546)

3.30 The Busy World of Richard Scarry (s) (8085121) 3.55 Bodge and Badger (s) (9059381) 4.10 The Chipmunks (s) (s) (7916340) 4.15 The Gnome from Down Under (Ceefax) (s) (205114)

5.00 Newsround (Ceefax) (9800492)
5.10 Blue Peter (Ceefax) (s) (141014)
5.35 Neighbours (s) (Ceefax) (s) (177817)
6.00 Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (459)

6.30 Regional News magazines (411)
7.00 Eureka. Entertaining and ingenious inventions (Ceefax) (s) (8701)
7.30 Watchdog. Consumer magazine (955)
8.00 EastEnders (Ceefax) (s) (4121)

8.30 Crime Beat. Soft Targets. Fighting crime in public places (Ceefax) (s) (3256)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (8695)

9.30 Panorama (Ceefax) (47072)
10.10 Match of the Day — the Road to Wembley. Das Lynam and Gary Lineker present highlights of tonight's sixth-round FA Cup tie between Manchester United and Southampton, at Old Trafford (s) (907430) 10.15 A Parent's Guide (302548) 10.25 The Shoot (598633) 10.55 Match of the Day — the Road to Wembley (264891) 11.30 Film 96 with Barry Norman (86527) 12.00 Film: Pure Luck (41763) 1.30am-2.50 Film: The Bonnie Parker Story (3161388)

10.45 Film 96 with Barry Norman. Includes reviews of the comedy *Get Shorty*, the computer-generated *Ty Story*, and Stephen Frears's troubled project, *Mary Reilly* (23782)

11.15 Film: Pure Luck (1991) with Martin Short, Danny Glover and Sheila Kelly. When a rich businessman's daughter goes missing while on holiday, a blundering accountant and an obsessive private investigator are thrown together to search for her. Directed by Nadia Tass (Ceefax) (s) (102411)

12.45am Film: The Bonnie Parker Story (1958, b/w) with Jack Palance and Dorothy Provine. Part of the Gangsters season, this is a heavily embellished life story of the 1930s outlaw Bonnie Parker and her rampage of crime through the southwest United States. Directed by William Winfrey (8381164) 2.05 Weather (576218)

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BBC2

6.00am Open University: Physics of Matter: A Macroscopic Viewpoint (862072) 6.25 Lifestyle, Work and the Family (747021)

7.15 See Hear Breakfast News (1922527)
7.30 Stingray (s) (Ceefax) (15527)
8.00 Blue Peter (s) (s) (51121) 8.30 Songs of Praise (s) (Ceefax) (s) (3761492)

9.05 Daytime on Two. Educational programme. Plus, for children, 10.00-10.25 Playdays (s) (4754589)

2.00 Joshua Jones. Cartoon (s) (20742817)
2.10 Holiday Cuttings. Learning to sail (20731701)

2.20 FILM: The Last to Go (1991). Marital infidelity drama starring Tony Danza and Terry O'Quinn. Directed by John Erman (Ceefax) (815066)

3.55 News (Ceefax) and weather (4229782)
4.00 Today's the Day. Quiz (s) (324)
4.30 Ready, Steady, Quiz (s) (508)
5.00 Esther (3879) 5.30 The Village (176188)

5.55 Global Warming: Oil and Water. The first of a 20-part series about the environment and the natural world (s) (894633)

6.00 FILM: Young Sherlock Holmes (1985) starring Nicholas Rowe. Rip-roaring adventure, written by Chris Columbus, charting the early years in the life of Conan Doyle's Baker Street detective. Directed by Barry Levinson (Ceefax) (s) (8222168)

7.45pm Under Exposed: Evidence. Muriel Gray presents the penultimate episode of the series on British photographic collections (Ceefax) (s) (428279)

8.00 Horizon: Planet Hunters. The story of the search for life in the universe (Ceefax) (s) (401904)

8.50 A Bad Time to Be a Man: Cruisers. Middle-aged businessmen explain their reasons for buying a motorbike. (Ceefax) (s) (52258)

9.00 Our Friends in the North. Final part of the epic saga charting 30 years in the lives of four Georgian friends. The year is 1955 and Nicky, Mary, Tokeer and Georgie are reunited in Newcastle (Ceefax) (s) (1368904)

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10.30 Newsnight (Ceefax) (241546)
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12.25am Weather (1586299)
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Telephone
merger
abandoned

Cable and Wireless will today confirm that hitherto secret talks about a merger with British Telecom have been abandoned.

The announcement to the London Stock Exchange follows revelations that BT chairman Sir Iain Vallance approached Brian Smith, the caretaker C&W chairman. BT would like access to C&W's extensive international fibre-optic cable network, and to share in the bright prospects for its phone businesses in Asian markets.

Bank action

The Bank of England is under pressure to act over a report suggesting that senior executives at Hill Samuel failed to act promptly on advice that the bank needed to strengthen provisions against property loans. Last year TSB commissioned an independent report into the matter from Linklaters & Paines, the City lawyers. The results were reported to the board and the Bank of England. The Bank of England is said to be reviewing the report.

Asian boost

Imperial Chemical Industries is to invest £200 million in India over the coming decade as part of a plan to increase sales from Asia to 25 per cent of its business within a decade. Charles Miller Smith, chief executive, said ICI would focus development on the same activities as its parent: paints, Polyurethanes acrylics and paint-whiteners.

Jetting ahead

European planemakers are ahead in the final round of a contest being conducted by China and Korea for partners to develop a 100-seat passenger jet, the Asian Express 100. McDonnell Douglas of America and Daimler Aerospace have both been eliminated, leaving only Boeing to rival the Europeans.



A convert to European co-operation: Michael Portillo seems to have been won over by claims that costs will be cut and exports made more competitive

Britain poised to join
European arms agency

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL PORTILLO, the Defence Secretary, is expected to announce this week that Britain is joining France and Germany to create a European Armaments Agency to co-ordinate continental weapons development and procurement.

Adoption of standard weapons systems by Britain and its main European allies will make it easier for armed forces to work together in peace-keeping operations such as that in Bosnia, as well as during wartime.

It will also trigger a rapid consolidation of the European defence industry, freeing British champions like British Aerospace, The General Electric Company and Vickers to form joint ventures or even mergers with continental rivals. The links should improve their competitiveness relative

to American rivals, which are beginning to enjoy enormous cost-savings after a wave of mega-mergers.

The entry-ticket for British membership of the Franco-German arms agency, set up in January, will be participation in a three-nation programme to buy 8,000 armoured personnel carriers.

Forced lobbying by the Foreign Office and Department of Trade and Industry has reinforced Mr Portillo's own desire to kick off the agency by participating in the so-called "battlefield taxi" programme.

The decision comes in spite of an ambivalent recommendation from the MoD's equipment advisory committee, which met last Monday. Some officials fear the price of the 2,000 light armoured vehicles Britain wants will be inflated by higher manufacturing

costs for key components from France and Germany.

But directors from Vickers and GKN, the two British contenders limbering up to compete with German partners for the contract, have told the MoD and DTI they believe the cost can be pared to about £500,000 a vehicle, compared with French and German estimates of £700,000 or more.

The National Defence Industry Council, including senior figures such as Dick Evans, chief executive of British Aerospace, Lord Prior, chairman of the General Electric Company, Sir David Lees, chairman of GKN, and Sir Colin Chandler, chief executive of Vickers, threw its full weight behind British membership of the agency at its meeting of February 28. The council has set up a working group to resolve difficulties

over granting export licences and ensuring security of supplies in time of war.

Britain has shown a mounting determination to join the European Arms Agency over the past year. Contacts were initiated by Roger Freeman, then Procurement Minister.

Although widely perceived as a sceptic on European integration, Mr Portillo, has apparently been convinced by claims that it will cut costs and make exports more competitive. When MoD officials argued that European collaboration on the armoured vehicle programme offered few advantages, he is said to have told them: "If you don't like this programme you'd better find another one."

Germany and France each require about 3,000 wheeled personnel carriers to replace ageing equipment used by

their forces. Britain wants 2,000, mainly to replace VF434, lightweight predecessor to the GKN Warrior, which has been successful in Bosnia and the Gulf War. British industry bosses say the vehicle would have excellent export prospects to replace many of the 80,000 American M113s in use worldwide.

Vickers has already agreed to collaborate with Thyssen-Henschel, the German tank-maker, on the project, known in Britain as MRAP. GKN is in talks with Krauss-Maffei, builder of the German Leopard tank. Alvis is expected to team with MAK of Germany to bid.

It now appears that the winner of an Anglo-German procurement contest will then team with Giat, the French state armaments group, to completed detailed designs.

Early share
fall likely
as brokers
watch Dow

By SARAH BAGNALL

CITY dealers in London are braced for a 50-point fall in the FT-SE 100 index today in response to the sharp 171-point drop on Wall Street last Friday.

The FT-SE 100 fell 47.9 points to 3,710.3 in spite of a quarter-point cut in base rates, and further falls are expected today as the bulk of the plunge on Wall Street took place after the London market closed on Friday evening.

Finance Ministry officials in Japan were believed to have held talks over the weekend in an effort to prevent any abrupt knock-on effect on the Tokyo stock exchange when it opens today.

Friday's fall in the Dow Jones was the third heaviest in Wall Street's history and followed stronger than expected February job figures.

The statistics sent shockwaves through the market. Although good news for the economy, it effectively ruled out the prospects of further cuts in US interest rates.

Peter Meinertzhagen, chairman of Hoare Govett Corporate Finance, said the drop on Wall Street will "probably mean the FT-SE 100 will open 50 points down and then see what the news is likely to be on Wall Street".

John Reynolds, head of strategy at NatWest Markets, forecasts a fall of between 30 and 50 points in early trading today before Wall Street opens at 2.30pm British time.

Although Friday's share price slide bears striking similarities to the falls that preceded the October 1987 stock market crash, few believe that the event is about to be repeated. This partly reflects the fact that there is no speculative bubble ready to burst in the UK.

As share prices in the UK are not seen to be as hyped up as those on Wall Street, the fall in the FT-SE 100 is expected to be contained by an early price mark-down by share dealers.

Share prices on Wall Street have been buoyed on the back of expectations of a couple of further quarter-point cuts over the next few months.

A London economist said: "It now looks as if these cuts are no longer possible. But now we have to wait for more data from America to see if February's job figures were a blip or not."

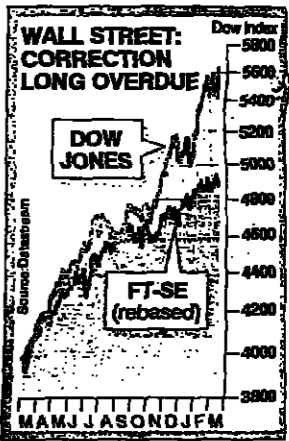
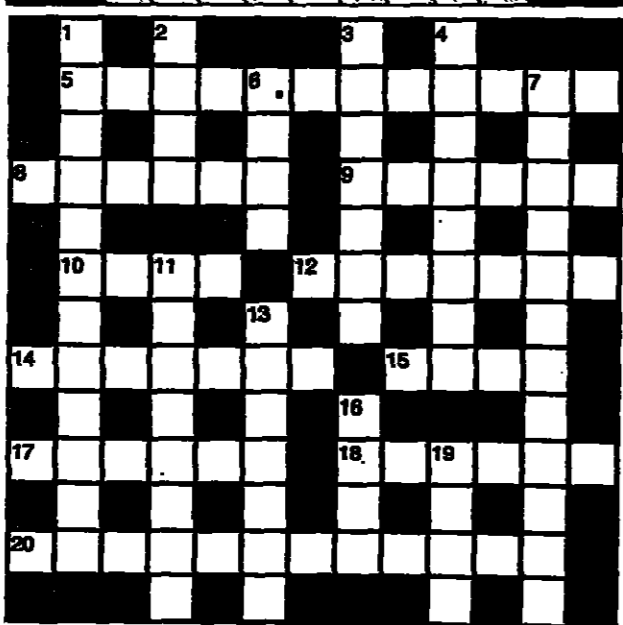
The Dow Jones has raced ahead 10 per cent since the start of the new year and Friday's fall wiped 3 per cent off those gains.

While the FT-SE 100 has risen strongly, the gains have been less startling and the financial results released by companies recently have been in line with forecasts and in some cases have exceeded expectations.

Mr Meinertzhagen said: "Wall Street has been defying gravity for some time. A correction has been expected for a while." There is still some latitude for Wall Street to fall further and its opening later today will impact on afternoon trading in London.

Dealers will also be keeping a close eye on the US bond market, which on Friday suffered its worst fall since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990. If prices continue to tumble there is a slim chance that some hedge funds may be forced into early liquidation.

Graham Searjeant, page 39

TIMES TWO
CROSSWORD

No 726

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9 Eats fast; derides (6)
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14 Floor-cushion: little pouch for games (7)
15 Sound of bells, laughter (4)
17 Gourd plant used as sponge (6)
18 Superfluity (6)
20 Of star study: stupendously large (12)

DOWN

- 1 Turbulently uncontrollable (12)
2 Eager, sharp (4)
3 Turn upside down in search (7)
4 Magnet for all eyes (8)
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7 With greatest ease (12)
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13 A search for escapee (7)
16 20 quires of paper (4)
19 Andean chewed stimulant (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 725

ACROSS: 1 John 3 Millioop 8 Marxism 9 Crisp 10 Lairy
11 Nosegay 13 Gunpowder 17 Abreast 19 Calve 20 Ripen
22 Unkempt 23 Steadily 24 Type
DOWN: 1 Jumble 2 Harbinger 3 Moment of truth 4 Locus
5 Sri 6 Popeye 7 Libyan 12 Gorbliney 14 Deokle 15 Walrus
16 Mettle 18 Annual 21 Poe

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Lloyd's aiming to
boost £2.8bn offer

By SARAH BAGNALL

LLOYD'S of London is set to intensify attempts to persuade the various contributors to its £2.8 billion settlement offer to increase their participations.

Names' representatives claim that the offer must be increased in order to ensure that it is accepted by the market's 34,000 names in a vote at the market's annual meeting, on July 15.

Today, names will receive estimates of what they need to pay to settle all their debts with the society. The figures are struck after deducting their share of the settlement offer.

The statement sent to David Rowland, Lloyd's chairman and a name, shows that he does not qualify for any of the £2.8 billion. "I don't qualify for any debt credits or litigation funds," he said. Mr Rowland, who waived £5,984 under Lloyd's previous £900 million settlement initiative, in 1993, is in loss, but the losses do not exceed his funds at Lloyd's.

The statements are only estimates of a name's bill. Final figures depend on the reserves needed for Equitas, a rein-

surance company being set up by Lloyd's. Figures will also vary if the settlement package grows. Negotiations to increase the package are under way, but will start in earnest only once Equitas figures are finalised. The Association of Lloyd's Members says the £2.8 billion pot "must be increased to reduce the pain for badly hit names and to avoid penalising unduly those who have enabled Lloyd's to trade on to a profitable future".



Rowland: no payout

South West
approach
expected

By CARL MORTIMER

SHARE dealers anticipate a bid or an approach for South West Water, the company already threatened with a proposed hostile takeover by Wessex Water, its neighbour.

South West Water shares soared by more than £1 to 618p last week when Wessex declared its intention to bid, but it is unlikely to name a price until the takeover proposal wins approval from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Investors in South West are unlikely to put up stiff resistance to an offer with a decent premium, having received few benefits from an investment in one of the least well-performing water companies. South West, widely perceived as a sitting duck, could attract a rival offer from an American utility, a proposal that might be more welcome to Ian Byatt, the water industry regulator. He is likely to demand significant reductions in bills to customers of both companies.

DIY tax as simple as XYZ

By JON ASHWORTH

THE Inland Revenue is investigating how a string of embarrassing errors appeared in a new booklet extolling the simplicity of self-assessment of income tax.

Sharp-eyed accountants have been jangling the switchboard at Somerset House in their enthusiasm to tell the taxpayers: "You got it wrong". About 60,000 draft copies of a booklet on how to complete the self-assessment tax return have been sent to tax advisers throughout the UK. Suspicions were aroused by accounts for the booklet's improbably named XYZ Snack Bar, itemising wages, motor expenses,

and other items associated with running a business.

Unfortunately, someone did not do their sums properly. Fixed assets in the example total £61,965, not £63,965, as quoted. The Current Net Assets are, in fact, Liabilities, and the figures then used on the assessment sheet overstate the profit by £10,000. The Revenue's embarrassment is compounded by an adjacent note that begins "Will I be penalised if I get it wrong?"

Speculation about the size of penalty that the Revenue may impose upon itself is sweeping accountancy firms. Maurice Parry-Wingfield, tax

partner in Deloitte & Touche, suggested that the error might be a ploy by the Revenue to test accountants' powers of observation. He added, more soberly, that the tax authorities are struggling against enormous odds to make self-assessment work in the face of pressing deadlines.

The Revenue promptly owned up when confronted, but insisted that the errors would be ironed out in the authoritative version, due out in May. A spokesman said: "There are a number of mistakes, and our apologies for that. We're not happy. We aim to get it right first time."



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BET is subject to a bid from Rentokil. Sir Christopher Harding, Chairman of BET, can be heard on the above freephone number with a message for shareholders.

The directors of BET Plc have decided to recommend a takeover by Rentokil, a company which has made a bid for BET. The bid is for 100p per share, which is a premium of 25% on the last trading price of 80p. The bid is subject to the approval of the shareholders of BET at a general meeting to be held on 12th April 1996.